

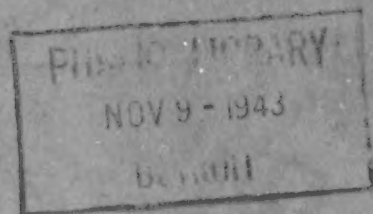
The

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

REVIEW



From Little Magic Horse (Macmillan)



NOVEMBER 1943

AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS IN THE LANGUAGE ARTS

ADAMS - STORM - STASNEY - LEONARD

DEVELOPING CHILDREN'S READING INTERESTS

A COMMITTEE REPORT

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THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW

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Audio-visual Aids for the Language Arts

HARLEN M. ADAMS¹

Elementary school teachers, as a group, have been among the most progressive in developing improved teaching techniques and in incorporating aids to such improvement into their teaching procedures. English teachers, on the other hand, have been tardy in employing scientific aids to learning. The teacher of language arts in the elementary school, therefore, has an unusual opportunity. She can use audio-visual aids not only to increase the

effectiveness of her own teaching, but also to stimulate the improvement of English teaching generally. Hence it is timely to examine the use of audio-visual aids to language arts instruction in the elementary school.

The number and variety of these aids can best be established by listing them as follows:

Visual

- Printed page, especially illustrations
- Flat pictures
- Blackboard, bulletin board
- Maps, globes
- Charts, graphs, diagrams, cartoons
- Models, specimens, representations
- Exhibits, museum materials
- Stereographs
- Microscope slides
- Projections—opaque, film, etc.:
 - Flat prints, photographs
 - Still films, filmstrips
 - Filmslides
 - Microfilm reader
 - Lantern slides
 - Motion pictures (silent)
- Tachistoscope, flashmeter

Visual—sensory

- Field trip or school journey
- Collections
- Dramatizations, pageants
- Marionettes, puppets
- Table-tops, sand table
- Demonstrations, experiments



Courtesy, Radio Council, Chicago Board of Education.

¹A member of the Department of Speech and Drama, Stanford University.

Visual—Auditory

Sound-on-film motion pictures

Sound film slides

Film strips with records

Television

Auditory

Radio

Phonograph—records, transcriptions

Recorders—dictaphone, disc, magnetic tape

Audiometer

To these may be added such instruments as the still and motion picture cameras; the typewriter as an aid to writing and spelling; and the ophthalmograph, telebinocular and metronoscope, which are used in reading programs.

Certainly all of these are not new and several might not be usable in the English class, but there are many that the majority of teachers have not employed in their teaching.

A point of view should be made clear, however, at the outset. These aids, which are thus correctly named, are not methods but are supplements to good teaching. They are valuable in so far as they contribute to learning. They aid the teacher in instruction just as do the library and laboratory, but they should be used with discrimination. Their usefulness is being continually proved, and their present wide-spread use by the army and navy compel consideration of them by the educator.

"The following claims for values of visual materials used adequately in the teaching situation are supported by research evidence:

1. They supply a concrete basis for conceptual thinking and hence reduce verbalistic response of students.

2. They have a high degree of interest for students.

3. They supply the necessary basis for developmental learning and hence make learning more permanent.

4. They offer a reality of experience which stimulates self-activity on the part of the pupils.

5. They develop a continuity of thought; this is especially true of motion pictures.

6. They contribute to growth of meaning and hence to vocabulary development.

7. They provide experiences not easily secured in other materials, and hence they contribute to the depth and variety of learning."¹

Similar claims can be made for audio and other aids.

Writing

Teaching language for communication involves the careful planning of the program in writing, reading, speaking, and listening.

Two suggestions are here made for the teaching of written composition: first, the providing of audience situations; second, the use of the typewriter. The teaching of writing has, in the past, been concerned with penmanship, spelling, grammar, and composition. These skills or tools must, of course, be mastered, but the writing program can be motivated by providing audience situations that grow out of the use of dramatizations, marionettes, radio, and motion pictures. Writing with a purpose means, for the child, writing something he wants to say for the sake of someone else, for the sake of communicating his ideas. Writing dialog for a dramatization provides a purposeful situation. Puppets demand even more in ability to create and to keep alive an interesting dialog. The preparation of an acceptable, readable, usable radio or motion picture script gives purpose to the improvement of the child's handwriting, spelling, language usage, and self-expression. The audience situation provided by these devices for communication is still frequently neglected in favor of the lone teacher-reader with her red pencil.

Radio listening is an aid to the writing

¹Encyclopedia of Educational Research, p. 1323.

program. One study² concludes tentatively "that effective utilization of radio programs by the teachers did stimulate some students to write more interestingly and more effectively." Another approach, using radio, is to have students write to read or be read. In this connection Glicksberg³ opines that "if it is to be restored to its high estate, the study of poetry must be intimately related to the ongoing, vigorous life of the times. Teachers must awaken to the fact that poetry on the radio has a mass appeal. . . Teachers have found that the reading of poetry on the radio acts as a spur to composition; it confers fame; it instills confidence; it arouses deep interest."

The typewriter is not adequately used as an aid to development of skills in written expression. Wood and Freeman⁴ report that there is strong evidence, "(1) that it is feasible to use the typewriter in the conduct of the ordinary work in the elementary school, (2) that the use of the typewriter in the informal fashion in which it was employed in this study produces an average typing speed approximately equal to the average handwriting rate in each grade, and also yields a very considerable degree of typing accuracy at the end of one year's use, (3) that the use of the typewriter stimulates elementary school pupils to produce more written material than they would otherwise produce, (4) that the classroom typewriter, as used in this experiment, entails no loss in handwriting quality or handwriting rate, (5) that it very probably raises in some measure the level of achievement in some of the fundamental school subjects, without observable loss in any subject, and finally (6) that the teachers regard the

typewriter as a valuable educational instrument and approve its use in their own classes, while the pupils enjoy typewriting and look upon the typewriter with marked favor."

The results of another study "indicate that the use of the typewriter imposes no large handicaps on the children's ability to express themselves in written narration. Furthermore, neatness and mechanical accuracy of margins, word spacing, and paragraphing, coupled with the trend toward better quality of the content in the experimental group compositions justifies the use of the typewriter in third-, fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade written narration until further experimentation gives additional information as to its value."⁵

"The typewriter contributes to spelling in the following ways: (a) it provides a clear-cut word image (b) it facilitates detailed word analysis, (c) it gives mechanical emphasis to correct letter order, (d) it makes extensive spelling practice attractive to pupils."⁶

"The machine affects elementary school composition work in the following ways: (a) it stimulates flexible expression, (b) it provides for extensive writing practice, (c) it makes possible effective drill on mechanics."⁶

Finally, two other devices may be mentioned in connection with the writing program. "Zyre concluded that the use of the lantern for the presentation of words gave better results than the use of the blackboard when combined with other methods and devices. The method seemed to work satisfactorily with poor, medium, and good spellers. Apparently a method combining visual pres-

⁵J. J. Foster—"Differences Between Typed and Handwritten Composition." *Thirteenth Yearbook of the National Elementary Principal*. June, 1934, p. 378.

⁶Ralph Haefner—*The Typewriter in the Primary and Intermediate Grades*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1932, pp. 121 and 159.

See also C. E. Unzucker—*An Experimental Study of the Effect of the Use of the Typewriter on Beginning Reading*. *Contributions to Education*, No. 610. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1934.

²Seerley Reid—"Reading, Writing, and Radio." *Journal of Applied Psychology* XXIV (December, 1940), 703-713.

³C. I. Glicksberg—"Poetry on the Radio." *Education* LXII (October, 1941) 89-95.

⁴B. D. Wood and F. N. Freeman—*An Experimental Study of the Educational Influence of the Typewriter in the Elementary School Classroom*. Macmillan Co., New York, 1932, p. 184.

entation through lantern slides, teacher-directed study, and the list context method is most effective."⁷

"Freeman and others investigated the possibilities of improving the positions of children in penmanship through the use of motion picture films. . . . The general conclusion was that those pupils shown the film made remarkably greater gains in position than did the groups receiving other types of instruction."⁸

Reading

Improvement in reading techniques results from the use of various devices. Word meanings may be enriched through such visual aids as: lantern slides, pictures and models, stereoscope pictures, motion pictures, picture dictionaries, illustrated encyclopedias, and catalogs. Flash cards may be used to promote speed and accuracy in recognizing words, and to encourage the perception of phrases and short sentences. The tachistoscope,⁹ a quick exposure device, aids this type of drill. Metronoscope drill is helpful for the seriously retarded readers who make many regressive eye movements and excessive reversal errors.¹⁰ A motion picture apparatus has been designed also for this purpose.¹¹

"The dictaphone has been used effectively by Marion Monroe. With the dictaphone the child can hear his own record and can, if he prefers, do his oral reading in private. At the Institute for Juvenile Research we have found the dictaphone to offer considerable stimula-

tion to retarded readers. They sometimes practice persistently in order that they may produce a perfect record."¹²

Visual materials for use in connection with reading difficulties, as reported by Johnowene C. Menger,¹³ include: clay figures, clothes-pin figures, beaver board illustrations, illustrated booklets, dramatization, stereopticon slides, newspaper cartoons, and children's easel drawings.

Finally, there are suggestions with regard to stimulating reading interest. "Visual materials. . . may play any of three roles in relation to reading: First, they may be a clear-cut substitute for it. Second, they may be a supplement or an addition. Third (and this is an approximation of their second function), they may be closely integrated with it."¹⁴ It is in connection with this third role that various aids are proposed here.

"Pictorial material may be projected upon a screen either as enlarged through an opaque projector or through the use of a transparent film or glass slide. Herein lie significant opportunities for the development of interests and experiences which relate to the facilitation of reading. Here we have an experience which is inexpensively made the common property of all children."¹⁵

Motion pictures are stimulants to reading. Experiments conducted by Wood and Freeman,¹⁶ Knowlton and Tilton, Alice Miller Mitchell, Lewis, and a questionnaire study at Montclair (New Jersey) Junior High School

⁷*Thirteenth Yearbook of the National Elementary Principal*, June, 1934, p. 436.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 444.

⁹For a discussion of the uses of this instrument see W. F. Dearborn, "The Use of the Tachistoscope in Diagnostic and Remedial Reading," *Psychological Monographs*, XLVII (No. 2), 1936.

¹⁰Good results reported by A. E. Taylor in *Controlled Reading*, University of Chicago Press, 1937.

¹¹W. F. Dearborn, I. H. Anderson, J. R. Brewer—"A New Method for Teaching Phrasing and for Increasing the Size of Reading Fixation," *Psychological Record* I, (1937), 459-75; "Controlled Reading by Means of a Motion Picture Technique," *Psychological Record*, II (1938), 219-222.

¹²Augusta Jameson—"Methods and Devices for Remedial Reading," in W. S. Gray (ed.), *Recent Trends in Reading*, The University of Chicago Press, 1939, p. 176.

¹³In Angela Broening (ed.), *Conducting Experiences in English*, Chicago: The National Council of Teachers of English, Monograph No. 8, 1939, p. 102-3.

¹⁴Edgar Dale—"Relationships Between Reading and Other Aids to Learning," in W. S. Gray (ed.), *Recent Trends in Reading*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939, p. 212.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 213.

¹⁶These studies are all reviewed by Edgar Dale in W. S. Gray (ed.), *Recent Trend in Reading*, Chicago: The University of Chicago, pp. 214-215.

all testify to increased quantity and quality of reading through the use of films. "In spite of the difficulty in interpreting causal relationships in this connection, there is little doubt that significant interstimulation maintains between these two mediums. No basis can be found for the criticism that viewing a motion picture dulls or thwarts the desire to read the book from which it was made."¹⁷ One of the most fascinating chapters in the report of the American Council Motion Picture Project deals with the use of motion pictures in developing reading ability among a group of impulsive first graders in Santa Barbara.¹⁸

It is evident, also, that radio programs can be used effectively by teachers who want their students to read more books. In a study by Seerley Reid¹⁹ the students who listened to five particular radio dramatizations read more books than those students who did not hear the programs.

Speaking

The teaching of speech for social communication can be greatly improved by the use of audio-visual aids. The child must have something to say and know how to say it. School journeys, and listening experience with radio and sound pictures give him things to talk about. Lively audience situations, as in discussions, dramatizations, and puppet shows, stimulate him to effective communication. Voice recorders, public address systems, and radio provide him practice instruments for improving his oral skills.

"Children immediately recognize that dramatization is a failure unless the actors make themselves heard. The audience demands sufficient loudness and clearness of tone. In any classroom where the organization is not

too informal, the children are quick to say, 'I can't hear! John doesn't talk loudly enough' . . . Clear enunciation is likewise demanded. The audience wants to know exactly what each speaker is saying. . .

"Dramatization affords a comparatively easy way for bashful children to get used to appearing before a group. . .

"In singing and reading some children are monotones. Their speaking voices tend to be dull and uninteresting. Something can be done for children of this kind by means of dramatization, and children who are not monotones may also be helped to more varied inflections and more pleasing voice quality."²⁰

"Because the use of marionettes is just another form of dramatization, the children by means of puppet plays can get almost all the values that are to be gained from other forms of dramatization. Although facial expression and bodily motions do not enter into puppet plays, there is even greater stimulus for variety of tone and clearness of enunciation."²¹

"The fundamental claim for the use of radio in the elementary grades may well be its usefulness in developing a more than adequate vocabulary on the part of the average pupil. At the same time it can, and undoubtedly will, stimulate the child's ability to express coherently and logically, within the bounds of his or her age limits, views on any and all subjects, directly connected with everyday living. Among other beneficial results may be included the development of a speaking voice which radiates a pleasing personality. In this day and age, much credit for an individual's social success may be traced directly to the ability to speak pleasingly and on a variety of widely diffused topics."²²

In a study of the use of phonographic re-

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 215

¹⁸Bell, Cain, and Lamoreaux—*Motion Pictures in a Modern Curriculum*. American Council on Education Studies, Series II, Vol. V, No. 6 (May 1941); Marjorie W. Reidel, "Film and Little Children," *Ibid.*, pp. 13-22.

¹⁹Seerley Reid—"Reading, Writing, and Radio." *Journal of Applied Psychology* XXIV (Dec., 1940,) pp. 703-713.

²⁰D. L. Brown and M. Butterfield—*The Teaching of Language in the Primary Grades*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1941, p. 99.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 121.

²²E. A. Conklin—"Utilizing Radio Effectively in the Elementary Grades" *Education* LXII, (March, 1942), pp. 387-389.

cordings²³ Miss Hultz reports that "the average child in the group making and discussing records decreased his errors by 31 while the average child who did not hear his records and received only suggestions from the teacher decreased his errors by only 15." In her summary are the following significant statements: "The use of the records favors greater and more rapid growth in the mechanics of expression such as correct phrasing, speaking in sentences, omitting unnecessary words, repetitions, changes in point of view, multiple starts, and initial 'ands'." "Records furnish a vivid means of making a child conscious of needed speech improvement." "The records provide an opportunity to analyze exact difficulties and thereby direct efforts toward improvement in oral language." "Making and hearing of records seem definitely to add to the children's enjoyment of oral language."



Courtesy, Radio Council, Chicago Board of Education.

Listening

Three aspects of a listening program will be touched on here: first, developing discrimination; second, improving voice, usage and vocabulary; third, studying literature. Tyler²⁴

²³Helen L. Hultz—"The Use of Phonographic Recordings in Improving Children's Speech." *Thirteenth Yearbook of The National Elementary Principal*, June, 1934, pp. 426-31.

²⁴I. Keith Tyler—"Developing Discrimination with Regard to Radio," *English Journal* XXVI, Feb., 1937, pp. 120-126.

has shown the importance of developing discrimination in radio listening, and the need for providing opportunities for radio listening and participation.

Probably elementary schools are doing one of their best jobs in this field. Certainly they are doing more than is done on other grade levels. All series of educational programs on the radio, even those intended for high-school students, have larger audiences in the elementary than in the secondary schools²⁵ and in the Ohio Schools the educational programs are used more often for classroom purposes in the elementary than in the secondary schools.²⁶

"That even very young children are susceptible to organized pressure via radio is demonstrated in a recent radio study of reactions and tastes of approximately six hundred six- and seven-year-olds and their parents where it was found that fifty-two percent of the children requested parents to buy merchandise advertised on the radio and thirty-four per cent sent for prizes, rewards, and other inducements provided to stimulate interest in certain products. If these very young children have reached an age where they are susceptible to organized pressure, does it not also follow that they are old enough to begin to receive training in analyzing this pressure and meeting it in a manner which reflects a knowledge of basic facts?"²⁷

That radio is an excellent influence for good diction and vocabulary building was the conclusion of the Chicago schools' experience with radio education.²⁸ Listening as a means of improving diction, style, and voice control

²⁵Seerley Reed—*The Classroom Audience of Network School Broadcasts*, Bul. No. 34, Evaluation of School Broadcasts, Columbus: The Ohio State University, 1943.

²⁶Seerley Reed—*Radio in the School of Ohio* Bul. No. 43, Evaluation of School Broadcasts, Columbus: The Ohio State University, 1943.

²⁷Muriel Crosby—"Media for Developing Awareness," *Childhood Education* XIX, (Oct., 1942), pp. 74-77.

²⁸W. H. Johnson—"The Elementary School Tunes In," *American School Board Journal* CIV, (May, 1942), pp. 28-30.

is listed by Anne Ray ²⁹ in reporting her use of radio.

Even more effective than the radio for listening in the classroom are records and transcriptions. Manufacturers are giving increased attention to this field and materials available for the elementary school language arts program are numerous. The popularity of the story-telling hour is enhanced by the use of tales recorded with sound effects, such as *Little Black Sambo*, *Ferdinand*, and others, or *The Child's Garden of Verses* set to music.

The National Council of Teachers of English has produced many recordings. On one, in Album Two of the "Masterpieces of Literature" series, a young actor, Wesley Addy, reads the Constitution with feeling and fervor. The impact of his reading will inspire even the dullest class. It affords an opportunity to explore the literary qualities and social significance of that great document. Appreciation of poetry can hardly be gained in an easier manner than by allowing the class to hear great contemporary poets read their own works, which is possible by the use of recordings.

²⁹In Angela Broening (ed.), *Conducting Experiences in English*. Monograph No. 8, (Chicago): The National Council of Teachers of English, 1939, p. 202.

A Unified Program

The teaching of the language arts, then, as they comprehend writing, reading, speaking and listening may be improved or stimulated by the use of audio-visual aids. These four areas, however, need not be conceived of as isolated or compartmentalized activities. The frequent use of units and of other unified programs in the elementary school prompts a short exposition of the possibility of unifying the language arts program through a radio project. This procedure developed with a group of seventh grade boys who worked together in a six-weeks summer session at the Stanford Communications Workshop.

At the beginning of the session, by way of defining needs, each boy made a small disc recording of his voice. This stimulated an interest in and concern for himself as others heard him, and the discussion soon turned to radio. The result was that most of the work of the summer developed around a radio station project set up by the boys. In the interest of democracy and of developing responsibility each boy selected, was elected to, or was appointed to, some position on the station staff. The writing work grew out of the need for defining the nature of each job, of preparing scripts, etc. Reading was done to learn about



radio in general, about their own particular tasks, and to obtain ideas and material for scripts. Improved speaking was motivated by discussions in connection with the project, by tryouts for parts, by rehearsals and recordings of the original scripts. Critical listening developed as a result of conducting surveys of and guides to radio programs, and of evaluating their own and the speech of others.

Sources and Uses

Space does not allow long lists of places from which to procure aids. Help may be found from the following:

"*Speak, Look and Listen.*" By Harlen M. Adams. Pamphlet No. 5 of the National Council of Teachers of English, 211 W. 68th St., Chicago, Ill.

New York University Film Library, 152 West 42nd Street, New York, N. Y.

"English Recordings," Catalog of the Telephone Institute, Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N. Y.

"Recordings for School Use," an evaluated list by J. R. Miles. World Book Co. 1942.

There are two sources of audio materials on free loan to schools:

Educational Radio Script and Transcription Exchange. Federal Radio Education Committee, U. S. Office of Education, Washington, D. C.

Institute of Oral and Visual Education, Radio Division, 101 Park Avenue, New York, N. Y.

At the present time some aids are unavailable because of war restrictions. However, there is no reason why every effort should not be made now to employ every known or obtainable means to increase the effectiveness of general public education in our democracy. After the war every teacher should be prepared to take advantage of the new wealth of aids to learning which will become available.

Language Drills from Radio Thrills

KATHRYN STASNEY¹

"Is that Africa?" asked the wide eyed youngster pointing to the large world map. "Gee, no wonder Chester Parker got lost. Look how big it is—and how far from our country."

"Who is Chester Parker?" inquired the third grade teacher who was illiterate in such matters as adventure thrillers on the radio. She was not to remain unenlightened for long, however, as thirty-eight enthusiastic youngsters all tried at once to tell her about C. Parker and the numerous misfortunes that had overtaken him.

The deluge of words and arguments brought forth by the mere mention of a radio serial revealed two significant facts. First, these children were spending from one to three hours daily listening to radio programs. Second, these hours afforded common experiences which even the most shy children could discuss freely and with delight. It was just too good an opportunity to miss.

For several days the children were encour-

¹Mrs. Stasney is now director of speech correction in the Alhambra (Cal.) City Schools.

aged to discuss radio and their favorite programs to their heart's content. Because of the frequent comments that, "My Mom won't let me listen to that program," or "Aw, I have to go to bed when Red Ryder comes on," the class decided to divide into several small listening groups whose members would be responsible for reporting on each episode of the program they chose to hear regularly. Obviously this reporting would necessitate some consideration of what programs were worth hearing and how the episode or story could be retold in a brief, clear, and interesting manner. Here, then, were the very aims of the oral English program incorporated into the sharing of common and thrilling experiences.

The first attempt to relate Jack Armstrong's adventures of the evening before revealed a need for the following skills:

1. The ability to "keep the action straight." (To preserve the continuity.)
2. To use complete sentences and vivid, descriptive words.
3. The ability to speak clearly and with sufficient volume.

These objectives were listed on the blackboard where they could be referred to frequently. They were discussed, applied to all speaking situations and made the basis of many



Courtesy, Chicago Board of Education.

speech drills. Approximately one week of rather intensive study was given to each objective. In addition, an attempt was made to work toward improvement in all oral work regardless of the subject or activity involved. Following each class period a few minutes were devoted to evaluating the voice and diction used, progress was noted and minor errors were corrected. This was done for a period of three weeks. Appreciable improvement was made in even this brief time by most of the class. By the end of the semester very marked improvement was evident in the children's ability to retell stories and in their enunciation.

In addition to the skills gained through their listening-reporting experiences the children developed a degree of discrimination with regard to the quality of programs, the amount of time to be devoted to listening and to the voice quality and speech habits of their favorite radio characters. That any discrimination was developed only through long and patient planning and guidance will be evident from the following criteria set up by the children at the beginning for selecting programs to hear regularly. They are, in the children's own words:

1. "Is it exciting, is there lots of action?"
2. "Are the sound effects 'super'?"
3. "Does the program tell you anything about the war?"
4. "Does it teach you about first-aid or victory gardens?"
5. "Does the story make your folks get mad at you?"
6. "Is it too scary for your little brother or sister?"

Such criteria as literary or cultural values, good speech patterns, general educational possibilities, and ethical influences could scarcely be expected to enter the mind of a third grade child. Consequently the teacher gradually introduced these considerations when programs were discussed. At first the chil-

dren staunchly defended the questionable diction and voices of some of their radio friends, but gradually they came to realize that although baby-talk, lisps, falsetto voices, and shopworn words or phrases might prove amusing for fifteen minutes they became actually unpleasant with constant repetition. A list of overworked words was written on the blackboard and possible substitutes suggested by the children were written beside them. These word hunts were challenging and provided supplementary spelling lists as well as adding to the "room dictionary" being compiled by the class.

Several hygiene periods were spent talking over the pros and cons of exciting radio programs at bed time. Listening versus playing outdoors or sleeping was also discussed. The school nurse and the playground instructor came into the room for these periods and presented their points of view. Several parents commented later that their children had become a little less unreasonable about listening to late programs.

The problems of literary discrimination and appreciation was approached in this manner. The entire class was encouraged to listen to "Twilight Tales," a late afternoon program which presented many of the fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen and Grimm. These bi-weekly broadcasts were in the form of fifteen minute monodramas with delightful musical introductions and backgrounds. Notes were sent home requesting the parents' cooperation in reminding the children of "Twilight Tales." On the proper day the teacher read or told the story to be broadcast. The scripts, which had been obtained previously, were placed on the library table and an announcement of the time and station was pinned on the bulletin board. Notices were written and sent to the other primary rooms or presented orally, calling the pupils' attention to the broadcast. This alone served to improve the children's speaking habits and greatly motivated the writing drill period.

These children whose limited reading ability prevented them from enjoying the scripts and books of other fairy tales by Andersen and Grimm were encouraged to find pictures in discarded books or to make their own illustrations for the story dramatized in each broadcast. These were displayed in the room or in the school halls when something very interesting was created.

When possible the theme music or background music of a program was noted and identified by the teacher with the music supervisor's assistance. Melodies from Beethoven, Chopin, Brahms, and Schubert appeared frequently. An attempt was made to find these melodies on music appreciation records or in the musical literature for children. These were heard, and in some cases, taught to the children. When the same theme could not be found, a similar one by the same composer was used instead. Both singing and music appreciation took on new meaning when it was discovered that music could greatly enhance the charm and dramatic qualities of a story.

Even arithmetic came in for its share of benefit from the utilization of out-of-school listening experiences. Learning to tell time became not only pleasant but much easier when they started with the hours, quarter-hours, etc., on which some of their thrillingest thrillers commenced or ended. The experts in telling time soon were able to determine just how many minutes they had to listen to the seemingly endless commercials. They became quite disillusioned in several cases. Learning the "TwoTurns" was no problem for those who followed the "Double or Nothing" and "Take It or Leave It" type of programs as soon as the arithmetic involved was revealed to them. The two's became fun and functional.

Certain ethical values and social skills came out of this "bringing radio into the classroom." Most obvious was the realization that

enjoying a radio program entails a fine consideration for the rights of others. They too had a right to hear a program without interruption, or, they should not be forced to hear some other person's program when desiring peace and quiet. The necessity for keeping the volume down soon became the topic for a rather heated discussion. The children were quick to see the "fairness of quiet radios."

A sense of responsibility was manifested by those children chosen to report on all important episodes in the life of their radio heroes, responsibility both for hearing the program and reporting in a pleasing and intelligent manner. Frequently after such a report the entire class would talk over the rightness or wrongness of some characters or action in the drama. Fortunately, writers of breakfast food serials (no pun intended) are mindful of the necessity to keep the morals of their heroes unquestionable at all times, and their health and patriotism of the highest caliber.

Another fine discovery the children made for themselves was that any joyous experience gains by being shared. This was most evident when a transcription of one of the fairy tales already mentioned was loaned to the class and they heard the program again. Their delight knew no bounds and immediately they wished to share their enjoyment by inviting other rooms in to hear the recording. This gave them an excellent purpose for writing invitations, learning to make brief explanations of unfamiliar words and phrases to be heard, and to introduce the story to their guests. This one experience gave rise to many weeks of free time activity. Large illustrations of the story were made in calso mine and crayons, characters were molded out of clay and carved out of soap, and poems or stories were written about further adventures of the leading character, who happened to be the Ugly Duckling.

About the middle of the year one ambi-

tious youngster suggested that the class could write a story of their own, act it out—even have music to go with it—and invite the other rooms in to see the play. His idea met with complete approval. Then and there the next quarter's work in reading, language arts, music, and leisure time activities was selected. Little did the children know how pretentious a program they had chosen. Committees were formed to read stories and plays, to find more models for their own dramatization, to compose "theme music" and to paint scenery or illustrate the publicity to be given their debut. Immediately their efforts revealed a great need for many new or improved skills in almost every subject. A few became discouraged and lost interest but most of the class worked untiringly although it was difficult to persuade the potential G-men that there could be much action in the story finally selected for dramatization. One of the girls whose brother was in the Air Corps had written a highly fanciful Christmas story about an army pilot who dropped gifts of toys, food, and medicine in-



Courtesy, Radio Council, Chicago Board of Education.

stead of bombs. The action was a bit difficult to present but the children overcame the obstacles of reality by sheer imagination. Drill periods became purposeful and leisure reading periods were all too short for these young dramatists bent on turning out a masterpiece.

In reviewing the outcomes of bringing into the classroom the children's out-of-school listening experiences it was felt that

much had been gained. Certainly the children had become more responsible, considerate, and critical radio enthusiasts. In addition, the learning of fundamental skills had been given great impetus, new horizons had been opened in reading, music appreciation, literature, and the graphic arts, and the original aims of improvement in the language arts had been achieved.

Radio Transcriptions in Upper Grade English

EMILY C. LEONARD¹

Schools departmentalized in the seventh and eighth grades operate on a schedule too inflexible to permit adequate use of radio broadcasts. For radio-minded teachers in such a situation, the radio transcription is a partial solution to the problem of bringing radio into the classroom.

In many ways, the transcription has teaching advantages that often can not be obtained by the use of the radio alone. The transcription permits of pre-listening on the part of the teacher by means of which a more thorough evaluation and preparation can be made than can usually be achieved as the teacher listens "cold" with her class to a broadcast. Also, the transcription offers the advantage of repetition for review, clarification, or emphasis. Some schools that are equipped with recording apparatus are making their own transcriptions of broadcasts. The recording can be made in one class that is hearing the broadcast and then can be used by other classes at other periods.

For the duration, however, we may find that recording materials are difficult to obtain

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and our schedules should be revised to provide in-school listening periods for all classes. This year for the first time, we have experimentally set aside two and one-half hours a week for all seventh and eighth grade classes in their home-rooms to hear two American School of the Air broadcasts. As we had to choose only two programs out of five, we selected *Science at Work* and *Far Horizons* as the best for the particular needs of these classes. This is, of course, only a compromise arrangement which I hope will soon include more listening time in our school. In addition to the two programs mentioned, we shall listen to *Tales from Far and Near* when books of upper grade interest are reviewed.

This article describes some of the ways in which I have utilized transcriptions in the teaching of language and literature as a means of providing in-school listening in all classes, at the same time maintaining uniform instruction in classes of the same level.

A Motivation of Reading

Many recording and radio broadcasts serve as a means of motivating reading with individuals, groups, or an entire class. Programs

from The "American Challenge" series, and "Frontier Fighters" series, such as *David Crockett*, *Marcus Whitman*, *Stephen Decatur*, *Buffalo Bill*, and *Wild Bill Hickok* have been an opening wedge into reading American biography and historical fiction. Wm. T. G. Morton led some students with a vocational interest in medicine to search for books in that field. *Death to the Microbe*, *Speech on Wings*, *The Growth of the Soil*, and *Common Sense Philanthropy* from the "Lest We Forget" series are other examples of transcriptions that stimulate special interest reading fields.

Correlation with Social Studies

One purpose of our literature class is to parallel somewhat the units of study in the social studies class. Recordings provide one kind of supplementary experience. A class studying California history listens to *The Romance of the Rancho* programs, another group studying The Westward Movement hears such programs as *Remember the Alamo*, *The Santa Fe Trail*, *The Story of Oregon*, etc. These programs are sufficient in themselves—a half hour of dramatic reality bringing more meaning to the pages of history.

An Enrichment of Literature Study

Literature comes alive when it is lifted on wings of speech out of the silence of abstract symbols on a page of print. The miracles of the phonograph, the cinema, and the radio are invaluable aids to the teacher who wants her students to appreciate the aliveness of literature. *Oliver Wendell Holmes*, *Edgar Allen Poe*, *Francis Scott Key*, and *Stephen Foster* from the "Cavalcade of America" series, *Walt Whitman* and *Jack London* from the "American Challenge" series, *"Poor Richard" Makes Good*, *Democracy in Literature*, and *The American Sense of Humor*, from "Lest We Forget" (Second Series), brought with dramatic force to my young students the fact that writers are real interesting people whose

rich life experiences make possible the creation of literature.

After the class had read *The Man Without a Country*, the recording of a dramatization of the story was played. In the discussion that followed we noted differences and similarities between the story and the play. The interest in the factual portions of the story resulted in our carrying through for several days with reading, composition, and oral reports. Some of the subjects covered were the life of Aaron Burr, the historical events that occurred during Philip Nolan's imprisonment, the justice or injustice of Nolan's punishment, and the trial for treason of Aaron Burr. This study brought forth a considerable quantity of creative expressing through poetry, art sketches, and even a cartoon strip relating the story. Several asked, "Are there any more recordings like that one?" What better proof that literature is a living experience when it is heard!

There are occasions when to do anything at all immediately after listening would be disastrous to the aesthetics of the experience. Such a time came when we heard Ernest T. Seton's *The Biography of a Grizzly* from The American School of the Air program, "Tales from Far and Near." Preparation for listen-



Courtesy, Chicago Board of Education.

ing consisted of a few leading questions for discussion:

What Seton books do you know?

What are the habits, habitat, and appearance of a grizzly?

Are men justified in hunting him?

Have you visited Yellowstone National Park?

Have you been in a sulphur springs bath?

What bear stories or poems have you read?

As they listened, I watched their absorbed faces revealing quick changes of feeling as they followed the tragedy and comedy in the story, and at the end I announced a quiet reading period. The next day a few students wanted to discuss the death of the grizzly. Was the story true? What was the poisonous gas that killed him? Also they mentioned books and stories about bears they had read. *Old Ephraim* by Theodore Roosevelt, and Amy Lowell's *Travelling Bear* were suggested for the next reading period. For the most part, the record was a complete experience satisfying within itself. Only a few wanted "to do something more." One boy, however, was so interested that he set forth to read all the bear stories he could find in the library—a research in *The Bear in Literature*!

An 8B class that was studying the British Isles in social science, studied English literature in our reading class. One unit was ballads. For our listening we selected *British Ballads in America* from the American School of the Air "Folk Music Program." I placed the words of the refrains on the board so that the class could sing along with the record. They requested that we repeat the recording several times until the class had memorized the favorites. "Hangman, hangman hold that rope!" was given a lusty preference.

When the class studied Shakespeare, they read Lamb's *Tales*, *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Julius Caesar*. Selections were read aloud

and dramatized. Then I presented Orson Welles's production of *Julius Caesar*. After the class had listened closely to the speech patterns, they attempted an imitation. The results were a marked improvement in dramatic reading, a deeper appreciation for the strong beauty of Shakespeare's poetry, and goals to reach for in speech development.

One day we heard a radio broadcast from London in which John Masefield read his own poetry. The class was surprised to hear his rising reflection at the end of each stanza of *Sea Fever*, for we had never read it in that manner. At the conclusion of the broadcast, we read *Sea Fever* in unison, giving it as much of Masefield's style as we could. Unanimously the class decided that "Masefield's way was much better!"

The conscious imitation of excellent speech has been one of several purposes in our using such recordings as Charles Laughton's *Gettysburg Address*, Paul Robeson's *I am an American*, and Vachel Lindsay's *The Congo*. We frequently make our own recordings of poetry read by a choric group. We compare the students' recording with the professionals' to learn how we may yet improve. If our recordings are good, we play them for other classes.

A Unit of Study in February

Always in February we plan a unit of study on George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, beginning with varied readings in biographies, stories, poems, plays, letters, and essays, such as Carl Sandburg's *Boyhood of Lincoln*, Mary S. Andrew's *The Perfect Tribute*, Edwin Markham's *Lincoln, Man of the People*, John Drinkwater's *Abraham Lincoln* (excerpts), *Washington's Letters to his Wife*, etc.

In using transcriptions with this unit of study, the main purpose is to enhance and deepen appreciation and understanding. Therefore, before we listen to a program, we read

and make sure we understand each selection to be heard.

From the series "Famous American Documents," we select for our listening *The American's Creed*, *Patrick Henry's, Give Me Liberty* (excerpts), *The Declaration of Independence* (excerpts), *The Constitution* (excerpts), *Paul Revere's Ride*, *Concord Hymn*, *Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight*, *Barbara Frietchie*, *Ships of State*, *George Washington's "Farewell Address"* (excerpts), and the *Blue and the Gray* from the "Lest We Forget" series.

In these recordings, all of them dramatic episodes based upon historical data, we are, of course, unable to read the selection first. Under these circumstances, I list on the board names, places, dates, and events that will be heard in the program. Through discussion, from the general knowledge of the class, we are able to prepare for listening. Other programs requiring a preliminary discussion are: *Farmer, Executive and Father of His Country* from the "Lest We Forget" series, *Yankee Doodle* and *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* from "The Story Behind the Song" series, and *The Marquis deLafayette* from "The American Challenge" series.

In our student assembly we present on Lincoln's birthday a radio script borrowed from the Los Angeles County Schools Audio-Visual Department. It is *The Young Mr. Lincoln* (a story of Abe Lincoln and Anne Rutledge). We set our stage to resemble as nearly as possible a radio studio, and broadcast on our public address system. As an added attraction, in sight of the audience, is the sound effects crew with their music records and sound gadgets. This accounts for the fact that in my Broadcaster's Club I always have several boys who join, not to be actors (perish the thought!) but to be technicians and sound-effects men.

Again on Washington's birthday we pre-

sent a similar program, using the script, *A Great Man's Wife*.

Throughout the unit each student is encouraged to fill a scrapbook with collected clippings, pictures, articles, and poems. Also included are original reports, reviews, and critiques on the selections we have read, and on related research topics, as well as original songs, poems, and art sketches from the children who like to express themselves creatively.

It is surprising to see the excellent results obtained in these scrapbooks, and they are always a center of interest in our annual exhibit held during Education Week.

A Pan American Unit

For another assembly, we began several weeks in advance with a preparatory discussion, during which we discovered how little we knew of the history of Central or South America. Mexico was more familiar because a unit of study on that country had been done in a lower grade. The class was well enough informed, however, to be eager to know more about the "George Washington of South America," the Great Liberator, Simon Bolivar.

We prepared a list of questions about his life, his work, his country, and his epoch. I had, of course, anticipated this interest in Simon Bolivar and had on hand a recording from "The American Challenge" series. As usual, I placed on the board a list of words, places, names, and dates that would be heard in the program. We clarified this list so that our listening would be made more enjoyable through a feeling of familiarity with factual material. We also examined a map of South America and orientated ourselves to the scene of action. By this time the eyes of the class were discovering a picture of Simon Bolivar and some South American scenes on the bulletin board, as well as a row of selected books on the reading table.

Following our listening to the program, we compared our list of questions with the information we had obtained. Some of our questions had not been answered, and new ones developed. To find the information we sought, we turned to the books in the room and visited the library. In this way a unit of study on South American history and personalities was motivated. In contrast to the February unit, the transcription was used in this instance, not to culminate, but to initiate and motivate a purposeful reading unit.

An examination of The Los Angeles County Schools Radio Log resulted in our listening to several broadcasts of Mexican and South American music. Also several children visited in Pasadena an exhibit of South American materials used as models by Walt Disney's artists, as a result of which our classroom soon displayed an exhibit of interest to other classes, as the students began to bring from family and friends a great variety of Pan-American objects of art and articles of use.

The reading selections in this unit included juvenile fiction, travel, folk-lore, and biography, as well as excerpts from adult books, such as the chapter on "The Amazon" from John Gunther's *Inside Latin America*, which was especially stimulating to discussion and further research. Each student shared his individual reading experiences with the class by way of an oral report illustrated with pictures, charts, maps, slides, exhibits, etc.

As a culmination of our unit we presented a program to the student body on Pan-Ameri-

can Day. We used a radio script on Simon Bolivar, and a script from the United States Department of Education on Latin American History. For next year, we visualize an expansion of this unit to include correlated experiences in other departments of the curriculum. Dances, songs, costume making, stage design, can be learned in physical education, music, art and shop, while in our English classes we can create a vehicle of pageantry that will vitalize a unit on our colorful, musical, and romantic neighbors to the south. Perhaps even the cooking class may add the flavor of Latin-American food to our fiesta!

The Development of Skills and Attitudes

In the foregoing examples of activities that develop during the utilization of radio transcriptions, it should be evident that a wide variety of functional language experiences are provided through which the pupils may obtain practice in improving listening, thinking, reading, speaking and writing.

The basic English skills and techniques are not minimized. On the contrary, every preparation for listening offers practice in word meaning, correct spelling, correct language usage, and correct speech habits. The follow-up procedures involve skills and techniques in varied types of oral and written composition, in silent and oral reading, and in creative expressions.

Of equal significance are the socializing experiences, the development of appreciation and discrimination, and the inculcation of ideals inherent in the activities.

Using Sound Motion Pictures in the Primary Grades

GRACE E. STORM¹

Providing Experiences to Develop Language and Concepts

One of the major tasks of the school is to develop the child's ability to use spoken and written language. The teacher utilizes the child's natural interests as a basis for speech and encourages natural social relations so that the child will feel no inhibition in speaking. The pupils talk in every class period of the day no matter what the activity in which they are engaged.

However, while the child's natural interests are used as a beginning, many of the ideas expressed are likely to be trivial, fragmentary, and meager in content. The accidental experiences and interests of a group of children will probably not be entirely adequate or suitable as a basis of language development. It is the teacher's business to provide experiences so challenging, so rich in content, that the pupils will have plenty of ideas about which to talk. Language is not developed in a vacuum. An abundance of situations that will stimulate ideas and the opportunity to express these ideas to others in his group afford a favorable beginning in language development for the child in the primary grades. character.



Courtesy, Erpi Primary Films.

Writers have had much to say concerning the close relationship between learning and experiencing. It is through experience that concepts are built. Impressions received directly or indirectly through the senses are necessary in order that learning may take place. Contacts with people, situations, and objects furnish the experiences through which new concepts are created and old concepts are altered and improved. Meltzer expresses the process thus:

"There is no spontaneous generation of concepts. Without experience, there would be no concepts. Concepts are the medium which relate our past experience to a present situation, or better, they emerge from that situation with an increment of meaning, ready for the confronting of the next situation, etc. And they do not come out unchanged. It is through experience that new concepts are created, old concepts modified, revamped, enriched, or thrown overboard. At any one moment in the life of one who has had some experiences, it is his concepts which give him his footing for perception and reasoning. The perceptive reaction takes place, new concepts are thereby created—but always through experience, through perceptual activities. Reason pure of all influence of experience is a fiction. Our thinking cannot be separated from our living activities, nor can it be separated from our fund of knowledge."²

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²*Children's Social Concepts, A Study of Their Nature and Development*, by Hyman Meltzer, Ph. D., Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University. New York City, 1925, page 4.

Excursions for Firsthand Observation

A child's knowledge will vary according to the areas of his experience, and his concepts will vary conformably. Children in certain localities are ignorant of many items of everyday life considered commonplace by children living in other localities. Urban and rural life display such differences that it is seemingly impossible for a child living in one area to imagine some of the elements of life in the other locality. Moreover, everyday objects with which all children are commonly assumed to be familiar often are only vaguely known to some individuals within the group.

Experience is the first step in the social learning of the child since experience will lead to the building of concepts. As the most important means of amplifying the range of pupils' experiences and of widening their interests, excursions and firsthand contacts are recommended, particularly for children in the primary grades.

Although excursions are the best means of providing firsthand experiences, it is not always practical or even possible to use this type of teaching. For developing concepts and understanding of some subjects two or three excursions are necessary. For instance, to acquire all necessary understandings of farm life, trips would need to be conducted at different times of the year. Moreover, the appreciation and the perceptions of the results of one season depend on some knowledge of what has taken place earlier. The farm in the late summer and fall presents a scene of maturing and fullness of growth which has been made possible by planting and cultivation during previous months. While great advantage is obtained by taking children on a trip to the farm, there should be no mistaken notion that the one excursion develops the many concepts necessary for an understanding of farm life. Perhaps the correct interpretation of certain activities belonging to one

season depend on the continuity involved, but it may happen that particular circumstances result in showing the events out of sequence.

At present the opportunities for excursions are even more restricted than they have been in previous years. Because of the gas shortage, private cars are not available for transporting children to places to be visited, and street cars and busses are crowded to capacity limits. Many community places are unwilling to admit visitors because of help shortages or



Courtesy, Erpi Primary Films.

government restrictions. Because contagious diseases seem to become more prevalent in wartime, it often is unwise to take children where they may be exposed to illness.

Visual Aids

If concrete experiences cannot be provided to give pupils contact with things in their natural environment, less direct but nonetheless useful ways to teach realities may be employed. Visual aids are promising ways of supplementing primary-grade pupils' experiences with the resources of their immediate environment. The term "visual aids" refers to pictures, photoprints, lantern slides, stereographs, maps, charts, globes, models, graphs, and motion pictures. In this article, however, the motion picture will be discussed as an effective means of making learning more realistic and of stimulating expression on the part of children in the primary grades.

While the motion picture should not be considered a substitute for actual experience, a picture has certain advantages which even

an excursion does not always present. For instance, in the case of the farm visit where activities are seen out of sequence, a moving picture would depict the activities moving along in their rightful places and might well be substituted for the actual trip. Furthermore, the pupils can often view in ten minutes what might take hours to see on an excursion. The special contribution of the motion picture is its characteristic of conveying certain experiences where the essential meaning lies in some kind of motion. The picture shows change and action, and we know how much younger children like action—people doing things, animals eating and carrying on the interesting activities of their lives.

As far as verbal descriptions are concerned, the pupil must be able to attach picture and impressions with the words if he is to make full and accurate interpretation. Listening to words standing for experiences which the child may not have had is bound to slow up the learning process. Since all the impressions received by a child are factors in his reaction to spoken words, his understanding and the concepts that he gains depend upon two things: (1) the breadth of his experiences and (2) the type of language chosen by the speaker. The motion picture serves as a splendid supplement either to the teacher's verbal presentation or to the excursion. When a sound motion picture is used, the picture is accompanied by description as the reel develops. The sound film, wisely chosen for its interest to primary-grade children and for the degree with which children can understand it, can become a potent factor in primary education.

The motion picture presents a large objective center. Attention of all the pupils is centered on one bright area in a darkened room, which in itself is likely to create a mood of receptivity. On this large screen details are presented in such a way that every child in

the room can grasp them simultaneously and comprehend them.

The motion picture is an aid in teaching social studies, since there is particular need in this subject for developing understandings and concepts in the various units worked out by the pupils. In any unit there must be a selection and an interweaving of meanings into a sequence of related ideas. Children in the primary grades are just beginning to sense continuity, which is often very clearly brought out in motion picture. This type of pictorial imagery is especially valuable at an age when the reading skills are not developed enough to permit wide reading with ease. In order to gain sufficient understanding for complete progress in the social studies, pupils need to do a certain amount of independent reading, much of which is beyond the ability of primary-grade children because of the difficulty in vocabulary and because of the concepts involved. Although modern books for children, basic textbooks, and reference books do a great deal to help interpretation by providing excellent illustrations, there is yet much to be done in making clear the meaning of many words, phrases, and even whole stories. Sound motion pictures such as "The Fireman," "The Policeman," "An Airplane Trip," "Farm Animals," "The Passenger Train," "Children of Holland,"³ and others help to develop and clarify understandings in social studies.

The motion picture serves as a stimulus for class discussion. A social situation is created when all view the same things, and a new motive is provided for sharing ideas after the picture has been viewed. Much of children's improvement in language ability occurs in discussion periods, when there is an audience situation in which each child is able to have a part. In such discussions the teacher participates but does not dominate. The motion picture helps in language training by provid-

³Produced by Erpi Classroom Films, Inc., 1841 Broadway, New York City.

ing a background of interests and a store of ideas which lead to further activities. The sound motion picture, with its accompanying narration, broadens the interests of the pupils and gives them tools for thinking. Since language is necessary for thinking as well as for conveying thought, the accumulation of a vocabulary implies growth of ability to think. Conversations and discussions after each picture give evidence of this growth.



Courtesy, Erpi Primary Films.

Procedures in Using Sound Instructional Films

In looking over catalogs from numerous film companies, the writer was impressed with the number of slides and films provided for upper-grade and high-school use. Some companies offer slides for use in the lower grades, but only a few have prepared sound motion pictures suitable for the younger children. In fact, after visiting several concerns and seeing the pictures which are available for the lower level, the writer came to the conclusion that few companies have really forged ahead in this line and prepared for the primary grades pictures about which one can become enthusiastic. One company (Erpi) offers a dozen or so sound films on topics which would appeal to pupils in the first, second, and third grades. Eight or ten of these films would fit in with social-studies units at this lower level. The list is as follows:

Adventures of Bunny Rabbit
Animals of the Zoo
An Airplane Trip

Children of Holland
Children of Switzerland
Farm Animals
The Fireman
The Policeman
French-Canadian Children
Gray Squirrel
Navajo Children
The Passenger Train
Robin Redbreast
Three Little Kittens

The material of these pictures is interestingly presented by a narrator, in a pleasing voice. Best of all, the content is accurate. As the writer sat happily gazing at "The Adventures of Bunny Rabbit," "Three Little Kittens," and "Gray Squirrel," she wished that every first-grade child could have a chance to see them. Seeing them gives the usual educational advantages, such as familiarity with animal and bird life, the formation of concepts, etc., and, in addition, they are sheer fun to behold. Children need more wholesome pictures on their own level to enjoy. What child is there who doesn't beg Mother to stop and allow him to feed the squirrels or plead for a bunny of his very own? Even an adult who is reluctant to admit a sneaking fondness for cats, (which the writer happens to have) could not help being amused by the antics of "The Three Little Kittens." When the hungry red fox appears on the scene in the picture of "Gray Squirrel," there is a real climax and plenty of excitement.

"An Airplane Trip," a picture about a little girl and her mother who take a long airplane trip, gives all the information that the children need in developing a social-studies unit on air transportation. In fact, many points were stressed which were either omitted or told so rapidly during a real trip to the airport that the writer gained ideas not gathered on the excursion. Such films as those dealing with children of other lands are more

suitable for third-grade work than for first- or second-grade work. They give splendid information about the food, dress, customs, and transportation, with children as the chief characters.

Preparation by the Teacher

Teachers who wish to take advantage of this modern type of visual instruction may be glad to have suggestions for using the sound films.

It is important that the moving picture be carefully selected so that it will be appropriate for the grade in which it is to be shown. A film which will serve to clarify and extend interests in social studies or in science units to be developed in a particular grade will be useful. Pictures dealing with processes should generally be postponed until the intermediate grades. The teacher should see the film herself before she shows it to the children. If she is thoroughly familiar with the content, she will be able to guide the class discussions after the showing and the follow-up work in language.

Introduction of the film.—Above all, the pupils should never be allowed to feel that they are seeing a "show" or that they are having some sort of celebration where they can talk and do as they please. They should regard the film showing as an especially pleasing class period, when it is important to be "good watchers and polite listeners." While this period is a lot of fun, they should understand that it is a part of their school work and that they must be courteous members of an audience.

The pupils will give better attention and observe more closely if the teacher gives a short introduction to the picture and indicates specific things to look for. Sometimes she will lead up to the most thrilling episode of the picture, as in "Gray Squirrel" by saying, "Gray Squirrel has some exciting adventures. Be ready to tell about the most exciting adven-

ture of all that Gray Squirrel has." It is just as essential to stimulate purposeful observation of a film as it is to build up interest in the reading of a new selection in a basic reader.

Suggested approaches.—A few approaches to the use of motion pictures are suggested.

(a) Social studies.—A film may be used occasionally to introduce a new unit in social studies; or, after the unit has progressed to a point where the teacher feels that additional interest will be aroused, she may present a film such as "Children of China," for example. If the pupils have begun a study of the farm, informal discussion about farm animals which the pupils have seen may open the way for appreciation of the sound picture which shows care and work of animals on the farm.

(b) Picture-books on the table concerning kittens, farm animals, or birds may lead to interest in a film.

(c) Stories in basic readers or juvenile books may arouse questions which can be answered by the film on the subject.

(d) Colored pictures mounted on the bulletin board suggestive of film subjects may lead to discussions and questions concerning the topic to be shown.

Showing of the sound film.—While it is unnatural to have absolute quiet during the showing of the film the pupils should be reminded that they must be as quiet as possible and enjoy the picture without talking. The picture should be shown several times if possible for at the first showing the pupils may not



Courtesy, Erpi Primary Films.

notice all the details. A day or so after the first showing a second showing will provide opportunity to find the answers to many questions which have been raised during the discussion and will add greatly to the children's understanding of the subject. Toward the end of the unit a final showing serves as an excellent review and summary.

Language Activities after the Film

(a) After the picture has been shown, the pupils should be allowed to respond in a spontaneous fashion. Since conversation in everyday life is not carried on in complete sentences, a child should not be forced in such a natural situation to respond thus to make his meaning clear. Proficiency in conversation implies an opportunity to talk with others informally about subjects or experiences interesting to all. It is an accomplishment, even with adults, to know when to enter a conversation, and the knowledge comes as a result of having participated in conversations freely at home and at school. While many children find no difficulty in this form of language, there are many to whom ease in speaking informally comes only after long practice.

Informal conversation may lead to discussion of particular aspects, when the pupil may find it necessary to stick to the point and to follow one idea. The first step, and by far the most important one, is to create such an atmosphere that children will talk naturally and spontaneously. This is satisfactorily accomplished through providing rich experiences by means of the motion picture. Once the foundation is laid and there is no fear in talking, the conversation can be guided along more organized lines.

(b) Giving one-sentence talks.—In response to a question by the teacher, the pupils may give a sentence, not because the assignment is worded in that way, but because it is limited to an idea which requires a sentence for expression of the idea. For example, the

teacher might say: "Tell one place where Gray Squirrel made a home for her babies." "What do you think was the best place Mother Cat took her kittens to live?"

(c) Short talks.—Short talks may be given about specific parts or incidents in the film shown. Suggestive titles may be given or written on the board by the teacher, such as:

What the Mechanics Did to the Plane
Where the Baggage Is Placed in the Plane
How the Plane Landed
Safety Devices in Your Home

(d) Longer talks which promote a sequence of ideas.—Children in the third grade are able to keep in mind a longer series of ideas and should have practice in giving oral talks in which they stick to the point and make a beginning of developing a topic. Suggestive topics may be:

The Ride to a Dutch Town
The Story of Mary's Ride in the Plane

(e) Group composition.—The pupils may wish to record the film story or a part of it in the form of a group composition to which as many as possible contribute sentences or suggestions. This may be printed on tagboard for a first-grade class or mimeographed for pupils in the third grade.

(f) Written composition.—The writing of one-sentence compositions may follow the showing of the film after the sentences have been given orally in the first two grades. These may be followed by two or three-sentence talks and compositions. In the third grade even longer compositions may be motivated by the film on topics similar to those used in oral talks. The pupils may engage in creative work, such as writing a poem about an airplane ride or about any phase of a picture which makes poetic appeal, and making up riddles and imaginative stories.

(g) Other activities related to language.—Some films will raise questions which will

stimulate the pupils to further reading. After seeing the "Three Little Kittens," they may read such books as *Charlie and His Kitten Topsy*.⁴ Perhaps stories on the same subject will be found and read in supplementary textbooks. Pantomiming or dramatizing incidents from various films should play a large part in the follow-up activities. For example, the pupils might act out the work of the different members of the Chinese family or compose a

⁴*Charlie and His Kitten Topsy*. By Helen Hill and Violet Maxwell. New York: Macmillan Co., 1922. Pp. 90.

play about Shiu Ming and his sister Mei Ling in their school.

Summary

The foregoing discussion has attempted to point out the values of the instructional sound film as an effective teaching aid in the primary grades. Used to supplement excursions and other realistic contacts, the motion picture is a means of furnishing experiences which are basic to the building of concepts and to language development. Suggestions have been given for the selection of sound films and for their use in primary-grade teaching.

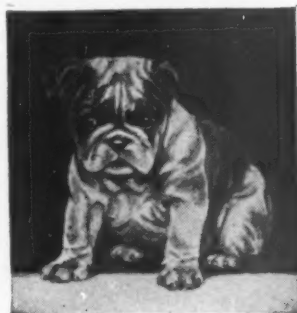
Developing the Reading Interests of Children

The Upper Grade Study Council of Cincinnati conducted a series of Study Groups in the Language Arts as part of its 1940-41 program. The members who guided the Study Group in Children's Literature met in later informal discussions and contributed this material. Committee: Althea Beery, Julia Dearsley, Fannie J. Ragland, Luise Reske, Thyrza Sternberg, Callie Trinkle. Reported by Elizabeth Guilfoile.

Aunt Lucy Bell chuckled mightily when folks asked her why her babies grew so fat and healthy. "It's this way," she always said, "I set the cream on the highest shelf and leave the ladder handy." *Lure and a Ladder* might be regarded as a reasonably complete formula for building the interests of children in books.

A morose and belligerent fifteen-year-old boy newly registered in the seventh grade marched along resentfully with the class for its regular weekly visit to the nearby branch library. He glared at the book-shelf and then walked over to a window from which he could watch the street. His teacher asked if he had found anything he liked. He said he

didn't like to read. "Anyways, I don't want to read about nothin' but dogs!" She located the easiest book on dogs available and offered it to him with a casual comment. She had



From *Nipper the Little Bull Pup* (Lippincott).

realized the boy's unpleasant manner in school arose from the fact that he knew he was unprepared to do the kind of work the other pupils did. He was engrossed with the book for the next half hour, and when the class was ready to go he applied for a library card in order to draw it out. He asked for more books about dogs during the following weeks and gradually he turned to books in other fields. It took much hard work and much patience on the part of his teacher to help him build up the requisite skill in reading. The one slight tie between books and dogs in his past experience was the clue she used to guide him into greater interest in reading. Perhaps a book most often makes its appeal through some interest that the individual already holds. However, the recommendation of another interested person is of magic influence.

The estimate of other boys and girls is usually of most interest to any child in his explorations into new books. That is why informal book chat and planned reviews are such an important part of the group approach to literature.

"Don't you wish you hadn't read that book so you could read it all over again?" says Robert as Camilla returns *The Good Master* to the classroom collection.

"I'd do anything for a dog like that," John comments feelingly after listening to a brief reading from Meeker's *Dignity*.

Frances gave a brief planned review of Mallette's *No Vacancies*, the story of a girl's effort to find employment when jobs were scarce, and of her successful adjustment. She added the comment, "Her struggles were your struggles. I'd just like to have her job!"

In one situation the teacher and some of her seventh grade pupils spent most of the noon hour in the classroom. The children had

no playrooms for use in inclement weather. They returned to the room as they finished lunch. Usually the teacher took up an interesting book herself and sat down to read. Presently the pupils followed suit. In this free atmosphere, with fewer children in the room and no program to be followed, book-chat developed. The boys and girls usually shared their interests through quiet and casual comments on books they were reading at the moment. Sometimes this developed into lively discussion involving the whole group.

Two girls, who had read *Wagon to the Star*, disagreed thoroughly upon certain points, and those members of the class who had read the book were drawn into the conversation. Those who had not read it were sufficiently intrigued to begin it immediately.

"Anyone who likes stories of typical American girls would enjoy this book, *Wagon to the Star*. As for myself, I found I was envying Mary rather than pity her for the happy life she led at the orphanage." "Jean, how could you possibly envy her? She had no parents or relatives to love her."

"I realize that! But she had so much fun at the orphanage even though she had no parents. I felt that she was loved as much by the children there as she could have been by real parents."

Individual Appeal of Materials

The unfolding of children's lives and interests influences their choice of books perhaps more profoundly than does their increased skill in reading. Change in the scope of interests is evidence of the attainment of new maturity levels.

The teacher's task involves both knowing the materials in children's literature and knowing the children. Individual abilities and interests cause children to make very different approaches to books. When books are imposed, through prescribed lists or through group pro-

cedures, the effect is quite generally the same—distaste on the part of some, indifference on the part of many, and interest on the part of a very few.



From *The Middle Moffat* (Harcourt Brace).

The thoughtful teacher studies the children through the succession of books that they choose and attempts to help them maintain a reasonable balance.

Many pressures in modern life tend to take the time of children and prevent reading or distract them from it. Comparatively few homes consistently provide the serene atmosphere and the attitudes toward reading which make it a part of daily life. Again there are some children who find reading difficult. Many factors within and without themselves may be responsible.

The teacher and the librarian find that reading must be "promoted" in some cases to the point where the deep intrinsic satisfaction of companionship with books is discovered by the child himself. Keeping a record of books read is a simple device that can be adapted in many ways to different situations. Book jackets may be put to many uses.

In one situation the seventh grade teacher and the librarian from the nearby branch of the public library worked in close collabora-

tion. The librarian always came to the classroom early in the year to talk about her new offerings. Later she would enter the room unobtrusively and place a handful of book jackets upon a shelf. The boys and girls would wait eagerly for an opportunity to examine them.

Displays of book jackets, the teacher and librarian agreed, should not be offered "cold." It was the practice, at least in the early part of the year, to make some comment which would offer additional stimulus.

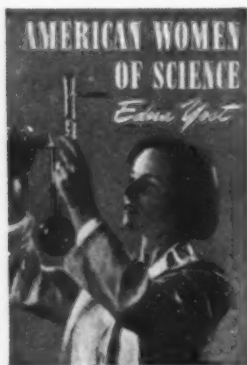
For instance, the teacher might post several book jackets and refer to one: "Last night I was reading *Happy Times in Norway* and I was very much surprised to know that it is the true story of two real boys and their famous mother, Sigrid Undset. The mother and the younger son are now in this country, refugees from a conquered land. I think this book helps to make clear why Norwegians love their country so deeply." Or:

"Did you know that there are cowboys in European countries? *The Herd Boy of Hungary* tells about them."

Groups as well as individuals may be highly selective in their choice of materials because of their peculiarities of background.

An over-age eighth grade group chose biographies of people who did hard and fundamental work. They became deeply interested in stories of real life and work. Their interest in this material was in striking contrast to that of the younger eighth grades that were in the school at the same time and who read widely and eagerly in many fields. Many of the older group had been retarded in school by circumstances. Some were quite mature, sixteen and seventeen years of age, and had never felt the thrill of achievement in school. They had never been recognized as having any kind of contribution to make. Of course, they

were much over-age for the elementary school, but what was worse, they were habituated to failure. Discouragement was deep-rooted and passivity was typical. Nearly all of them were planning to leave school as soon as the grade was completed. Some had come into the school with a definite aversion to reading. All needed an entirely different outlook, a new set of satisfactions. However, they had one real, major interest. They were thinking of the next step in life—the job. It was fortunate indeed that they came at this point under the guidance of a teacher who knew biography and its fundamental values for boys and girls.



At the upper grade or early Junior High School level some girls seem to leap suddenly into adult novels. Rapid maturation makes the romantic love theme of paramount importance. Many historical novels have value for these girls. *Alice of Old Vincennes* is a well-thumbed favorite. A more modern contribution is *My Dear Patsy*, the story of Thomas Jefferson's daughter.

The vocational novels, in so far as they are founded upon honest observation of conditions in modern life, can fill a real need at this point. They are built upon factual backgrounds, spiced with adventure, and with romance. Among those which depict occupations most interesting to the girls are *Carol Goes Back Stage*, Boston; *Sky Service* by

Elizabeth Lansing; *I Served on Bataan* by Juanita Redmond.

Differences in interests may be more subtle than the differences of cultural background or maturity. One little girl, coming from a quaint, old-fashioned home, reads her *Little Women* and other Alcott books and enjoys them. Other children of today are indifferent to these books which have meant so much to their elders. A boy who reads everything that comes to his hands said that he had gone through three volumes of the Alcott stories but added, "I don't care for them. The people never go places. They just stay home. They're always in the parlor. What's a parlor?"

Children who are even averse to reading are sometimes drawn to books by special interests.

Edward, in the eighth grade, over-age for his class, and retarded in all respects, had no desire to read and at first refused to take part in the reading activities. But he became interested in the printing press. This class set up the type and printed the school paper. He read to learn how to operate the press and then, curious about the evolution of the art of printing, read into the history of it. He began to realize that one could find out things through reading and acquired a fairly wide range of reading interests in a comparatively short time.

Contrast in Age Levels and Interest Levels

Interest level and reading ability level may be at very different points. The same book may serve the interests of children in different ways at different age or achievement levels. The highly pictured Petersham books of science, social studies, Biblical stories, and the like are very appealing to primary children. These children use the books chiefly for the illustrations. They gather information from the pictures and they use them to develop

their own drawings and murals. But the older children turn to these books for the brief and telling content which requires considerable reading ability.

Boys of fourth and fifth grade level with quite limited reading ability use such magazines as *Popular Science* and *Popular Mechanics* if they are available. Pictures and diagrams are easier symbols to interpret than printed words.

Small children draw the Brownie books from the library and pore over the fantastic and complicated illustrations. Older boys and girls, so limited in their skills as to draw little pleasure from the printed page, are often seen to do the same thing.

The needs of young children who develop rapidly in reading should be met. Betsy, age four, is very much aware of reading because Margie, age six, brings her primer home and reads to everyone in the house, including Betsy.

The intelligent and cultured young parents of these little girls stimulated interest in reading in the first child by their own habits of reading, and through reading to her and providing her with attractive and appealing picture books. But they did not lead her to read for herself because they thought it would be much more desirable for her to learn to read with other children in school. They provided many interesting activities more appropriate for a pre-school child than learning to read. However, Betsy's environment contains the added stimulus of Margie's reading and as the four-year-old is continuously associated with her sister it would be almost impossible for her to avoid learning to read before she goes to school.

This sharing in the reading of a brother or sister just a little older is the most common cause of the very early reading of some children. It is less likely to occur when a greater age range exists in the family. Joan, at five,

loves picture books and stories but she has not been drawn into reading for herself by her older brother and sister. They are ten and twelve years of age and their reading habits are similar to those of adults.

There should be provision in the first grade for the group of six-year-olds who have already begun to read or who are fully ready for rapid progress in reading. This is a phase of the reading readiness problem that has had little attention. In many instances children of ability and energy became problems in school because of not being provided with enough challenging activities in the first year in school. Some of the trouble-makers, undoubtedly, are those children who have to wait for their first grade fellows in reading.

In some schools children of the fourth and fifth grades are reading four or five years beyond their age and maturity level. How does life and school meet their needs?

Carolyn was such a child. At eleven, on a standard reading test, her reading age was established at sixteen years. Moreover, she was a half-year older chronologically than most of the boys and girls in her class, and the class had few children who were at all comparable to her in maturity or keenness of intellect. The teacher, however, was not obliged to carry alone the responsibility these facts implied. The parents took their brilliant daughter quite casually and provided experiences for her growth as a matter of course. For instance, during one Christmas holiday she went with her father on a buying trip to New York, visited the wholesale furriers' establishments with him and came back with new information and fresh enthusiasms. She was avid of information but she gathered it in many ways, not merely through reading. She came out of a community which produced many over-intellectualized, highly maladjusted children. But she was wholesome, playful, happy, and well adjusted socially and emotionally. As

she advanced into high school and the university she continued to read extensively and to relate her reading to continuously broadening interests in life.

Contrast in the Needs and Interests of Groups

Classes of the same grade may be different in age level and in mentality and maturity. A very young third grade in a suburban area might be presumed to have interests different from those of a retarded third grade group in an underprivileged section of a city. But generalizations on this score are probably unsafe. Close study may be needed to discover whether the nine and ten-year-olds of a retarded group are older or younger in their life interests than the eight-year-olds of an average third grade. Will they care more for horses, automobiles, airplanes, how things work, and how people live while the younger children play in the playhouse and ride in the barrel train? Certainly efforts in the direction of supplying materials of higher-maturity interest levels, with the simplest possible vocabulary, should be encouraged. *The Box Car Children* and *The Real Life Readers* represent different types of material for this purpose.

The seven-year-old, a large boy, who was scooting about the first grade floor pushing the small train and "choo-chooing," oblivious of the rest of the world, was "playing himself out" at the pre-school level because he had missed that experience when he should have had it. Should his reading include *The Little Engine that Could* with its fanciful personification, or a *factual story* of trains?

The thirteen-year-old sixth grader coming from a community where books were denied to her may read materials far below her achievement level simply because she has been starved for books. One class of Negro girls in a very much underprivileged group were reading fairy stories almost exclusively at thirteen

and fourteen. They have been unable to read enough of them at ten because of their low reading ability.

Provisions for Many Types of Reading

The teacher who wishes to help the children develop varied and permanent reading interests does not classify books or reading activities too closely.

She leads children to recognize that reading includes many specific activities and that it can serve their purposes in manifold ways.

Miss D. tells the story of an eighth grade boy who was searching through bound copies of the *National Geographic*. He was embarrassed when the teacher approached. During this period it had been made clear that the boys and girls were free to read from their own choice of materials. He said hurriedly, "I'll be *reading* in a minute, I'm just looking up some information now."

Relation of Reading to Specific School Interests

In factual reading the habits and attitudes developed are as important as the information acquired. Skills in locating and interpreting pertinent material once developed, even at an elementary level, are useful lifetime tools. The habit of seeking and using the information books offer is one which should mark every individual who has completed the elementary school. But development of interests that lead to more reading is probably the most important of all the results sought.

In one school where the children come from extremely limited background many of them read adequately for the grade level, some indeed quite beyond their grade level. But their teachers have found that it is easier to teach them to read than to help them build the background of experience that makes wide reading meaningful. The children seem to lack, particularly, the background to appre-

ciate good fiction. Sixth grade teachers find the girls reading fairy stories instead of getting on with fiction that has its basis in reality. It may be that in such a situation the fairy story offers more complete escape from the drab and often sordid conditions which govern the child's life, but possibly these children simply lack too many of the fundamental concepts that the life of the child in the normal home and community supplies. Some of these children come from incredibly barren homes. They may not meet a book or paper outside of school from one year's end to another. Their parents may be illiterate.



From *Smoky Bay* (Macmillan).

The teachers attempt to supply the experience that makes the reading meaningful, even while they realize the great limitations of the school in this respect. It is a matter of great joy, therefore, when children are observed to be actually pushing out the hampering walls of their environment through the use of the experiences and the books which the school provides. A second grade child poring over a science book he has drawn from the library for its pictures and its simple text makes a discovery. "Why look, Miss M! It says here that the Cecropia Moth has four big eyes on its wings. That's just what the spots looked like on our moth when it came out of the

cocoon." An almost illiterate fifteen-year-old boy displays with keenest delight an attractive salad he has developed in his cooking class from magazine pictures and recipes. "I can learn to be a chef and make things like this! The pictures make the reading easy," he says.

The boys in one sixth grade room of this school are accustomed to selecting books on geology and reading surprisingly advanced materials because their teacher, through her exceptional background in science, encourages them in practical field studies. They roam far afield on spring and autumn week-ends gathering rocks and observing strata.

The more capable girls in the class develop keen interests in the mythology of Greece and Rome as it relates to the study of background civilizations in the social studies program.

This intense channeling illustrates the desperate need of the reader to relate his reading, like all of his experience, to the familiar.

The concern of the teacher of this area is always for a new way of life for the school child, a way of life that enables him to bring health, happiness, and understanding with him to school. In many instances immediate and obvious growths on the part of individuals, on the part of whole groups, can be traced to change in economic conditions, change in housing opportunities and the like. Reading is broadened as life is broadened. Reading skills are matched with fundamental understandings and the restrictions of limited experience are in a measure overcome.

Need for Materials and Guidance

One of the problems common to schools is the lack of good modern collections available to the children. Desirable reading material for the children and young people has yet to be recognized as a community responsibility. The absence of leaders—both teachers and

librarians—with broad and thorough qualifications for the guidance of these readers is likewise a grave handicap.

Very few parents, even those of good educational background, know anything about selecting books for their children. The development of the interests of the parents in this field is another responsibility of the school. Small children and young boys and girls are missing their present opportunities to learn to know and to like good books. They are spending time, vitality, and curiosity on second-rate, if not undesirable, reading material.

Teachers find it wise to encourage the ownership of books, for many reasons. Even in communities where good libraries are accessible and where book stores offer wide choice of materials, children's books are chosen unwisely in many cases.

Parents Study Children's Books

A vigorous Parent-Teacher Association of a private school undertook and carried through over a period of several years a Book Fair. The original purpose of this was to promote the buying of the best books by the parents for their children. Naturally it promoted acquaintance by the parents with the children's books and a reading and appreciation of these. Through the cooperation of the public library, the teachers in the school, the children, and all the parents, books were assembled and placed on display for a week or more. Parents were encouraged to come and examine them in time to order for Christmas presents. An arrangement was worked out by which purchases could be made at the school if the parent preferred. This was an outgrowth of, or was suggested by, early informal attempts by teachers in this community to encourage parents to know and to buy the best books for their children. It was common for the

children to receive as gifts expensive picture books and other types of books appealing to the eye but often questionable in value.

In communities where less money is available schools do well to encourage the purchase of cheaper editions of good books. Some teachers make a practice of supplying lists of worthwhile materials to be found at the ten-cent stores.

The building up of personal libraries, and book-lending among the children are both interests which the schools can foster.

In one situation where the reading interests of the girls in a fifth grade class were noticeably limited, the teacher helped them to organize a "Book Club" which met after school in their homes.

Through this activity she involved the parents in the problem. Mothers and fathers and other interested adults began to make individual purchases, and each girl took an eager interest in whatever every other girl had added to her library.

One group of Parent-Teacher organizations took steps to see that children who were generously supplied with books in their homes were encouraged to share with others and went through their collections in early December to make books they had "outgrown" available to younger children in less fortunate communities.

"Of the making of books there is no end," is as true of children's material as of adult literature. The young reader must also be selective. To lead him to like those books which will make his life richer and finer, and to help him to bring to them the keenest and fullest response is a task to intrigue every teacher. In this she has the help of the trained librarians. She should have, to a much greater extent than now, the help of the home and the community.

Children's Magazines Today

WESLEY FRANCIS AMAR¹

The current controversy over Comic magazines raises the question as to what alternative magazines are available to children. The writer has compiled a list of magazines published for children up to fourteen years of age, excluding all but one Comic publication. The list proved difficult to make, because publication data, contents, and style of magazines vary at times from one issue to the next. Also, many adult magazines are read by children, and conversely, many well written children's magazines are read by adults.

Librarians are not agreed as to which magazines are most suitable for children. One authority states that some librarians think that children just look idly at the pictures when doing such reading, while others believe children may be led through this reading to seek other material.² Fargo believes that only a few magazines deserve consideration when they are being selected for young children, because pupils in the upper grades often prefer adult publications.³ One librarian reports that magazines are in constant circulation, those as far back as 1941 being as popular as current numbers, while another finds that children have little interest in magazines. . . "probably due to lack of interest in the material presented."

Combating The Comics

Many children devote most of their voluntary reading to Comics, and the prevalence of these publications testifies to the tremendous vogue they now enjoy. Relatively unhindered by the censorship that is exercised over the regular magazines, featuring the elements of action, color, suspense, pictorial appeal, and drama, and catering to the natural, often repressed interests of the adolescent, Comics have far outdistanced the better publications in popularity. Consider this advice given a

¹Mr. Amar, who has his master's degree in English from Loyola University, is a teacher in the Chicago Public Elementary Schools.

²Jewel Gardiner and Leo Baisden, *Administering Library Service in the Elementary School*, A.L.A., Chicago, Ill., 1941, pp. 76-77.

potential writer for the Comics: When the action is slow or there is no action, let the writer . . . "pep things up with dramatic angle shots or by having the character doing something as he is talking, lighting a cigarette, or twirling his hat, loading a gun."⁴

Witty has listed more than a hundred books which may be read in lieu of Comics,⁵ but he does not suggest any magazine for such a purpose, although Comics are themselves in magazine form. One librarian notes that children are familiar enough with magazine form in the shape of Comics, while another states that *True Comics* is in use in the library to answer the demand, but she does not think it is the answer to the problem.

The Magazine Market

Tabloids, pictorial magazines, and publications which feature condensations of reading material are flourishing today, and the two most popular magazines for adults and older children are *Life*, which increased its circulation from 2,382,000 in 1940 to over three and a half million this year, and the universally read *Reader's Digest*. The circulation of magazines has increased almost 27 million from 1941 to 1942, and there are 32 million "pulp," and almost 7 million Movie Magazines on the market.⁶ Publishers of children's magazines must meet these adult distractions with material suitable for their juvenile readers. Magazines of an earlier generation, despite their often capable writers, existed primarily for character building. Today, publishers, who must satisfy the demands of child psychologists, parents, and librarians, and at the same time hold the child's interest, have insisted that their writers avoid obvious moralizing, and that they respect the child as an individual. Whether or not they have succeeded in this endeavor is not yet known.

³L. F. Fargo, *The Library in the School*, A.L.A., Chicago, Ill., 1939, p. 241.

⁴Robert Turner, "Calling All Comics," *Writer's Digest*, Nov. '41, pp. 38-39.

⁵Paul Witty and M. Foster, "Books vs. Comics," *Bulletin of the Association for Arts in Childhood*, 70 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.

There were found to be over 90 monthly and 85 weekly magazines in the market. 28 of the monthlies were of a religious nature. Five of these, the *Catholic Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, *Queen's Work*, and *Catholic Boy*, the Methodist *Child Guidance in Christain Living*, and the Latter Day Saints *Improvement Era* have a circulation of over 50,000 each, and 22 of the entire list have an equally large circulation: *National Geographic* has over a million, *Calling All Girls*, (with its two sister magazines, sponsored by *Parent's Magazine*) has a combined circulation of over 775,000, *Popular Mechanics* and *Popular Science Monthly* over 600,000, *The Open Road for Boys* and *Boys' Life* over 300,000 each, *American Junior Red Cross News*, *Jack and Jill*, *Children's Activities*, *American Girl*, *Messenger of the Sacred Heart* over 200,000 each, and *Child Life*, over 100,000.

With the exception of news periodicals, weeklies are generally religious publications, and many of the presses are financed by religious organizations. A few of the sixteen with a large circulation are religious: *Young America* and *Our Sunday Visitor* have over 400,000 each, *Young Catholic Messenger* and *Classmate* have over 300,000 each, *Boys Today*, *Forward*, *Junior Scholastic*, and four of David C. Cook's Sunday School Weeklies have over 100,000 each. Sunday School Weeklies are used as lesson help material in Sunday Schools, and are selected by teachers and not by children. Because of their nature, they are not usually subscribed to by libraries, but they have a large circulation in private homes.

The Survey of Children's Periodicals

Twenty-five monthly and twenty-five weekly of the better known magazines were selected from the comprehensive list for this survey. Children's librarians in all cities with a population of over 100,000, and additional workers in the field, received this list, with the request that they rank the magazines with which they were familiar, according to the extent they believed the magazines met the following qualifications: format, general literary quality, popularity with children, and extent to which they promoted democratic ideals. They were also asked to furnish any additional information they possessed about

these magazines, or about any that had been omitted. Of the number who answered, 65 ranked them as requested. The table that follows represents the number of votes each magazine received for first choice in meeting the qualifications mentioned:

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The Open Road for Boys	6
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Boy Life (Weekly)	5
Science News-Letter (Weekly)	4
Jr. American Red Cross News	3
Jr. American Red Cross Journal	3
Young America (Weekly)	2
Calling All Girls	2

The Librarians' Comments

The following commentary represents opinions held by librarians and workers in the field, throughout the country:

Monthly Magazines For Young Children

Child Life, 729 Boylston St., Boston, Mass.,
Ed: Wilma K. McFarland, Ages: 2-12,
Grades: 1-6, Subscription Price: \$2.50,
Circulation: 132,779.

Most popular magazine in Long Beach, California and Seattle, recommended in New Bedford, considered excellent by the Staff Advisor of the Children's Book Committee of the Child Study Association of America in New York, good in Knoxville, fair in Los Angeles, has a wide circulation in Philadelphia, considered not so literary but more popular than *Jack and Jill* in Tacoma. The fifth most popular in the service.

Children's Activities, Child Training Assoc., Inc., 1018 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill.,
Ed: Dr. G. C. Myers, Ages: 2-10, \$3.00,
Circulation: 229,819.

Considered excellent for younger children in Knoxville and San Francisco, good for younger children in

Seattle, widely read in Philadelphia, considered a family magazine, good of its kind, and suitable for Grades 3-5 in Los Angeles. In spite of its large circulation, it did not prove exceedingly popular with librarians.

Children's Playmate Magazine, A. R. Mueller Printing Co., 3025 E. 75 St., Cleveland, Ohio, Ed: Esther Cooper, Ages: 5-14, \$1.50.

Not on the selected list sent to the librarians, but reported to be read widely in Philadelphia, recommended in Chattanooga and Cleveland, and considered excellent in Canton.

Jack and Jill, Curtis Publishing Co., Curtis Bldg., Independence Sq., Philadelphia, Pa., Ed: Ada Rose, Ages: Under 10 years, \$2.00, Circulation: 281,757.

Recommended for younger children in San Francisco, read widely in Philadelphia, considered excellent for home use but not for the library because of too many coloring features or cutouts, in New Bedford, as good for primary grades as *Child Life* is for slightly older children, in Columbus, less popular but more literary than *Child Life* in Tacoma, fair in Los Angeles, and poor in Minneapolis.

Story Parade, Story Parade, Inc., Education Office, 70 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y. Ed: B. Nolen, Ages: 8-12, \$2.00, Circulation: 15,158.

Read by people of all ages, in prisons and in settlement houses. Portland believes its standards are higher than *Child Life*, although it is not so popular—and suggests its make-up could be improved. In Providence, it is considered artistic and literary but is not so popular, in Worcester, format is considered unattractive to children, and is said to have most literary merit, but very little popularity. Considered a very outstanding magazine in San Francisco, rated excellent by Los Angeles and by the Staff Advisor in New York, used widely in Philadelphia, thought to have high quality but lacks popularity with young children in Seattle, considered the most literary magazine in the library, and very popular with ten-year-old girls in Tacoma.

In general, is thought to have much literary merit, but lacks popularity with children. Despite its relatively small circulation, it was rated the highest in the poll.

Wee Wisdom, United School of Christianity, 917 Trace Ave., Kansas City, Mo., Ages: 6-12, \$1.00.

Not on list, but many recommended that it be added. Quite popular with young children in Milwaukee, recommended as character building magazine for boys and girls in Chattanooga, preferred to *Jack and Jill* in New Bedford, and considered superior to the "be paper-dolled Jack and Jill" in Dallas.

American Jr. Red Cross Journal, American Red Cross Bldg., Washington, D. C., Ed: E. M. Brown, \$1.00, Circulation: 25,000.

American Jr. Red Cross News, American Red Cross Bldg., Washington, D. C., Ed: E. M. Brown, Circulation: 235,000.

Although the Red Cross News has a circulation over nine times as great as the Journal, it scored only slightly higher, and is considered inferior to the Journal by at least one writer (Martin).

Magazines For Older Children

American Boy. In 1941 had a circulation of over 300,000, but now out of print.

American Girl, Official Publication of Girl Scouts, 155 E. 44 St., New York, N. Y., Ed: Anne Stoddard, Grades 1-6, \$2.00, Circulation: 203,608.

Recommended in Seattle, Knoxville, New Bedford, Pittsburgh, and San Francisco. Tacoma reports it is as popular as *Boys' Life*, but has better literary quality. Portland says it is popular, but its fiction has poor literary style, Kansas City says it seems attractive, but is never read by the girls. Rated fair in Los Angeles. The outstanding magazine for girls, and fourth highest in poll.

Boys' Life, Boy Scouts of America, 2 Park Ave., New York, N. Y., Ed: James E. West, Ages 14-18, \$1.50, Circulation: 317,120.

Recommended in San Francisco, Seattle, Rochester, New Bedford, Knoxville, and Philadelphia. Considered fair in Los Angeles, popular, but with fiction of poor literary style in Portland, as popular, but not so literary as *American Girl* in Tacoma.

The outstanding magazine for boys, and has considerable prestige. Although its circulation is much greater, it scored below *American Girl*.

Calling All Girls, 52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York, N. Y., Ages: 9-15, \$1.00, Circulation, (Combined with two sister magazines sponsored by *Parents' Magazine*), 775,000.

Value aroused much controversy. Chicago suggests it be excluded from list, Long Beach would not put it in library, Oklahoma City ranked it zero on all counts, Pittsburgh dismissed it as a Comic book, and Los Angeles considered it mediocre. On the other hand, it is widely read in Philadelphia, has poor format but ranks above the other girls' magazines in other respects in Columbus, is discussed by the girls in San Francisco, although it is not in that library, and is considered excellent in its field, by the Staff Advisor in New York.

The Open Road For Boys, 729 Boylston St., Open Road Pub. Co., Boston, Mass., Ed: Clayton Ernst, \$1.00, Circulation 302,379.

Has lost considerable prestige by cheapening its make-up, and introducing sensationalism and comic strips, according to one writer (Martin). Recommended for older boys by Chicago Board of Education Libra-

rian and by New Bedford, rated good by the Advisor in New York, fair in Chattanooga and Gary, widely read in Philadelphia, and poor in Minneapolis. Despite its large circulation, it did not rate highly with most librarians.

St. Nicholas, St. Nicholas Magazine Inc., 545 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y., Ed: Mrs. Juliet Lit Stern, Ages: 10-15, \$3.00.

Had an enviable literary reputation in former days, and is now for older children since it recently resumed publication. Seven librarians believed it to be still out of print, while others were not familiar enough with the new magazine to judge it. Portland says it starts out well, Columbus doesn't believe it comes up to its former place as a child's magazine, Springfield, Massachusetts believes it needs improving and does not appeal in its present format, Long Beach says it has varied in recent years, and would not rate it in its present form as highly as formerly. Read in Philadelphia, considered good in Seattle, fair in Gary, and poor in Los Angeles.

Special Interest Magazines

Although Witty found that boys and girls have an equal interest in Comics throughout the middle grades, boys generally have a greater interest in magazines suitable for their age, than have girls. Perhaps this can be explained by the fact that out of all of the monthlies, over twenty were written for boys, catering to their special interests in Aviation, Mechanics, and Science, while only six were written for girls. Out of the Special Interest Magazines, eleven are for boys, and none is exclusively for girls.

Aviation

Model Airplane News is recommended by San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia, and has a circulation of over 60,000. Others very popular are *Air Facts*, *Air News*, *Air Trails*, and *Flying*, all having a circulation of over 100,000, *Flying Aces*, over 75,000, and the lesser known *Air Youth Horizons*, and *Industrial Aviation*.

Mechanics and Science

Popular Mechanics, Popular Mechanics Co., 200 Ontario St., Chicago, Ill., Ed: H. H. Windsor, Jr., \$2.50, Circulation: 673,084.

Recommended in Tacoma, New Bedford, San Francisco, Philadelphia, and Seattle. Rated excellent by the Advisor in New York, fair in Gary, Chattanooga, Los Angeles and Rochester, and by far, the most popular with boys in Kansas City,

Popular Science Monthly, Popular Science Publishing Co., 353 Fourth Ave., New York, N. Y., Ed: Charles McLendon, \$1.50, Circulation: 731,158.

Very popular with boys in Providence, New Bedford, Philadelphia, recommended for older boys by the Chicago Board of Education Librarian, and in Minneapolis and Seattle, considered excellent by the Advisor in New York, good in Seattle, and fair in Los Angeles and Tacoma. Although its circulation is higher than that of *Popular Mechanics*, it ranked well below it in the poll. Neither of these magazines was considered as having any pretensions to literary style, although both are exceedingly popular.

Nature and History

Jr. Natural History Magazine was said to lack general appeal in Portland and Pittsburgh, and was considered excellent by the Advisor in New York, and in Los Angeles, and Tacoma.

Nature was thought to have only specialized appeal in San Francisco and Pittsburgh, is read by older students in Erie, Long Beach, and Rochester, is considered good by the Chicago Board of Education Librarian, is not popular with children in Portland, one of the best of its kind in Seattle, considered excellent though not subscribed to in Columbus.

National Nature News and *Jr. Historical Journal* were occasionally recommended.

Weekly Magazines

Although 870 marks were given to monthly magazines, only 118 of the weeklies were rated. The ones most often mentioned favorably are listed:

Junior Scholastic. Recommended in Pittsburgh, Detroit, Seattle, Columbus, considered excellent by the Advisor in New York. Increased circulation over 100,000 in two years.

Science News-Letter. Not widely known. Increased circulation over 3,000 since 1941.

Young America. Read almost exclusively in schools. Increased circulation over 120,000 in two years.

Pathfinder. For older students. Circulation over 520,000.

Girls' Companion, **What to Do**, **Young People's Weekly**. All are Cook Publications, and not known by many librarians. Circulations over 100,000.

Junior Review and **My Weekly Reader** were recommended by a few librarians.

The Educational Scene

In order that the Four Freedoms and the principles of the Atlantic Charter may be changed from a dream to reality, American teachers everywhere are attempting to teach young people the meaning and implications of these great documents. Their one great need is a knowledge of suitable reading matter to aid in the accomplishment of their purpose.

The National Council of Teachers of English is therefore happy to announce the publication of an excellent reading list on the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms, for grades seven, eight, and nine (and, indeed, for senior high school students and adults), compiled and annotated by Miss Dorothy E. Smith of the Queens Borough Public Library. The list is co-sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Council for the Social Studies, and the American Library Association, and is available at the office of the National Council of Teachers of English, 211 West 68th Street, Chicago 21, Illinois. The price is 15c per copy, 10c each in quantities of ten or more.

The Volta Review for August, 1943 carries a discussion and listing of books which have proved popular with hard of hearing children. It was written by Mary G. Newton . . . Practical suggestions for experience reading in the first grade with illustrations of charts based upon pupil experiences are given by Ethel Covington Allen in the May *Virginia Journal of Education* . . . Agnes G. Gunder-son of the University of Wyoming, who wrote on writing interests of seven year olds for the *Elementary English Review* in May, tells of her experiences in teaching spelling to second graders through a program of free writing, in the June, 1943 *Elementary School Journal*. In general her plan was to encourage children to write stories in their scrapbooks and to give individual assistance with both pronunciation and spelling when children needed it to use new or difficult words. The development of spelling consciousness, emphasis on similarities and likenesses in words, recognition of familiar parts of words, and emphasis upon phone-

tic elements were among the techniques employed . . . Interesting articles on the war and the English language by Robert C. Pooley and George O. Curme are found in the May, 1943 issue of *Word Study*, published free by the G. & C. Merriam Company, Springfield, Massachusetts, and edited by Dr. Max J. Herzberg of Newark, New Jersey, president of the National Council of Teachers of English.

Ways in which the elementary school can help the government in its efforts to secure public co-operation in its rationing and price-control program are suggested in the *O.P.A. Bulletin*, published by the Educational Service Branch of the Office of Price Administration, Washington, D. C.

The U. S. Office of Education has also just published an annotated list of inexpensive publications on North Africa and the Middle and Near East, by Ruth A. Gray.

The Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction and the Society for Curriculum Study were recently combined in the new Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development. The first issue of its official organ, *Educational Leadership*, appeared about October 10, under the editorship of Ruth Cunningham.

The following are the Junior Guild selections for the month of November, 1943: P Group (boys and girls, 6, 7, and 8 years old), *Soldiers, Sailors, Fliers, and Marines*, by Mary Elting and Robert T. Weaver, Doubleday, \$2.00; A Group (boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years old), *The Open Gate*, by Kate Seredy, Viking, \$2.50; B Group (older girls, 12-16 years old), *Teresita of the Valley*, by Florence Crannell Means, Houghton, \$2.00; and C Group (older boys, 12-16 years old), *Sponger's Jinx*, by Bert Sackett, Random, \$2.00.

Review and Criticism

[The brief reviews in this issue are by Peter De Vries, Helen Laurie, Bernardine Schmitt, Dora V. Smith, and Jean Gardiner Smith.]

Mocha, The Djuka. By Frances Fullerton Neilson. Illustrated by Avery Johnson. Dutton, \$2.00.

Mocha was a black boy belonging to the Djukas (jungle people) of Dutch Guiana. He and Terry, an American boy who was on an expedition with his father, had many experiences together and became fast friends. Both boys were intelligent, had human understanding, and great courage—they were kindred spirits of different races and background.

The story is well told with vivid description and action—is so gripping that the reader wants to continue reading it. A respect for the Djukas, some knowledge of animal and plant life near the equator, and a definite feeling for jungle life are given. It is illustrated by black and white pictures which are beautifully composed and clarify the context. The book itself is attractive in size and print. It should appeal to children from eight to twelve years.

H. L.

Chooky. By Lucille Wallover. Illustrated by the author. McKay, \$2.00.

In 1883, Susie and Sammy and their Mom and Pop lived in an old stone house on a farm in Pennsylvania. Sammy, who was nine, wanted most of all to own an organ—but they were terribly expensive—the children knew because they had looked it up in the mail order catalogue. Susie, who was seven, loved the little lame chicken she called Chooky; but she knew that some day Pop would take it to market to sell. The book includes such incidents as the Love Feast, Go-to-Meeting Day, sending a friend from Baltimore to look for elbedritchies (snipe hunt), house-cleaning time, and a practical joke which miscarried so that Sammy had to stay at home while Susie was allowed to go to Harrisburg to the big Market Day. At the end of the story, Susie finds a second hand organ in a store, and Sammy's dream comes true; Pop allows Susie to keep Chooky, and at last she has a pet of her own. A quiet story with moments of laughter, and a pleasant picture of family life. Grades 3-4.

J. G. S.

Lays of the New Land. Stories of Some American Poets and Their Work. By Charlie May Simon. E. P. Dutton. \$3.00.

A selection from the American poets made, not on the basis of the merit of the poems, but for their appeal to children and fitness for juvenile intelligence. In many cases, perhaps most, these are two very different things, but Charlie May Simon seems to have made her choices with intelligence, and the running commentaries on the poets, managed in each case on a narrative pattern, skillfully serve her aim—that of whetting the child's interest in poetry. Seventeen poets are represented, from William Cullen Bryant through a selection of seven moderns including Frost (in whose case it seems to have been unnecessary to sacrifice quality for child appeal, for some of his best-known and most characteristic poems are here), Sandburg, Lindsay, Fletcher, and Stephen Vincent Benet. Illustrated by James MacDonald.

P. D. V.

Peachblossom. By Eleanor Frances Lattimore. Harcourt, \$2.00.

Peachblossom was a little Chinese girl of six. She had four treasures—her cricket, Hard-to-Catch, her clear pink pebble, her bracelets, and an old doll. She clung to these throughout all her hard experiences, leaving the farm with Aunt Lee and Brother when word came that the enemy was approaching, on the long journey by mule past the deserted village and beneath hovering airplanes to the city, and during her trying days at the school for girls, where she finally met up with her real aunt—the one who had made her doll, by means of which she was identified. Together they went to the country, where their farmhouse became a sanctuary for a whole family of children left homeless by the bombs.

Without undue stress upon the horrors of war, the author brings home clearly to youthful readers what the war has meant to the children of China. Although *Peachblossom* lacks the warmth and individuality of *Little Pear*, her story will touch the hearts of young readers in the early middle grades and will tell

them simply and with human tenderness the things they ought to know. The simple, carefully designed pictures, especially those of children in action, add much to the attractiveness of the book.

D. V. S.

Many Moons. By James Thurber. Harcourt \$2.00.

This once-upon-a-time tale of the Princess named Lenore is full of the suggestiveness, the imagination, and the humor which children love in a fairy tale. The rage of the king at the Royal Wizard, the Lord High Chamberlain, and the Royal Mathematician who fail to produce the moon for his little daughter and the cleverness of the Jester who does will delight the children. Never was progressively increasing rage better reproduced in pictures. Of course, the one problem was how the Jester could explain the persistence of the moon in the sky after he had given it to the Princess; but she explains the inexplicable as easily as children with imagination always do. The humor, the action, and the mysterious depth of the backdrops in the illustrations by Slobodkin make this a distinguished picture book.

D. V. S.

Bobo, the Barrage Balloon. By Margaret McConnell. Pictured by Tibor Gergely. Lothrop, \$1.50.

Bobo, the barrage balloon, saw a plane take off from an enemy submarine. He managed to break his cable and to warn the ground crew of the danger. Then, in order to prevent the plane from returning to report its information, Bobo captured the submarine by wrapping his cable around the wires below the conning tower. As a reward for his courage, he was cited by the President and given the biggest copy ever made of the Congressional Medal of Honor. Because of the excitement of the war theme and the amusing balloon, children will probably find the story entertaining. There is a marked resemblance to the Gramatky books save that at no time do either illustration or text approach the real humor and the disarming personality of such as Loopy, Hercules, or Little Toot. Grades 3-4. To be read aloud to younger children.

J. G. S.

Shark Hole; a Story of Modern Hawaii. By Nora Burglon. Illustrated by Cyrus Leroy Baldrige. Holiday House, \$2.25.

With the great need for stories of modern Hawaii and for a better understanding among races, it is a pity that Miss Burglon should be content with presenting a story so melodramatic and so fantastic as this. The book is a composite of two themes. First there is the school with its picture of the national teachers and their fine work in helping both children and parents. A quiet but significant story is within that frame and one regrets that the author was not far sighted enough to let the story stand on its own merit. But with the introduction of the second theme—the stealing of the cattle by the white men and weird shark disguise used by their leader, the value of the quieter theme is lost. What with sharks appearing in the middle of fields, trucks disappearing from the road, and hidden caves, a story which might have played a part in a better understanding of Hawaii collapses into cheap melodrama. Grades 5-6.

J. G. S.

Peter Painter and the Holidays. By Frank Martin Webber. Illustrated by Vera Neville. McKay, \$1.00.

Christmas, the New Year, Easter, and the Fourth of July are the themes of four apparently written-to-order stories. Even Vera Neville's illustrations lack the strength and piquancy which one expects of her. The stories themselves somehow miss the essential quality of each holiday. Despite the dearth of holiday material, this book does little to satisfy the need. To be read aloud to Grades 1-2.

J. G. S.

Picture Book of Insects. By Albro T. Gaul. Lothrop, \$1.50.

Characteristics of the appearance and habitat of the common garden and field insects, amusing and interesting anecdotes and fables, and facts regarding their helpfulness or harmfulness, make this book a welcome library addition. The author, who is recognized in the scientific world for his work in entomology, has added to the fascinating context beautiful full-page photographic enlargements, as well as actual size shadow-pictures.

B. G. S.

The War Plane and How It Works. By Captain Burr W. Leyson. E. P. Dutton & Co., 1943. P. 224. \$2.50.

A technical book which analyses information on war planes for the layman. The context is illustrated by photographs, diagrams, charts.

The size and print are good. It is written in a clear and direct style. It appeals to a present interest in war planes—a permanent interest in planes. A high school class organized around aviation at the present time or physics classes would find good material to use supplementary to a textbook. It is too technical to use in schools below the high school.

H. L.

A Squash For The Fair. By Grace Paull. Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., 1943. P. 24. \$1.50.

Little Mary plants and tends some zucchini squash in her victory garden. She takes a large squash which she has raised to the school fair. When Mary goes to the fair she has a disappointment and then a big surprise. The story is accompanied by delightful lithographs in four colors.

The book is a pleasing size. It is about a squash raised in many victory gardens during the past summer. Children will be delighted with this book at least from six to ten years.

H. L.

Poems for Josephine. By Kathryn Worth, Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1943. P. 56. \$1.50.

Josephine and her mother live beside a lake and enjoy the outdoors together. From time to time the author has written a poem for Josephine. These poems appeared in "The Atlantic Monthly," and in "Story Parade," and other children's magazines. They are now compiled into one volume. Josephine, thirteen years old, wrote the "Introduction" and took the photographs which illustrate the context. The poems are delightful in composition and content. Children will like them and will see more in outdoor life after having read them. Children at least from five to ten years and perhaps older should enjoy this book.

H. L.

Jules Verne, the Biography of An Imagination. By George H. Waltz, Jr. Holt, \$2.50.

Here is the story of the famous writer of scientific fiction, whose tales still fascinate us after many years. This "biography of an imagination" portrays Verne as an enthusiastic student of science and tells how he selected his subjects and planned and completed his writings.

The author depicts France, and Paris in particular, during the changing periods in which Verne did much of his writing. For upper elementary grades.

B. G. S.

Glory Be! By Janet Lambert. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1943. Pp. 207, \$2.00.

Well-timed to the present day theme of army life, *Glory Be!* presents the experiences of two families in New York just before—and after—Pearl Harbor. Their teen-aged daughters, Penny Parish and Carol Ware, provide a variety of humorous, exciting, and patriotic incidents which will be much enjoyed.

B. G. S.

Our New Baby. By Lili E. Peller and Sophia Mumford. With an introduction by Hazel Corbin and illustrations by Dorothy Buck. Vanguard, \$1.50.

Written to offer information on the new baby to the older child in the family, the book gives factual material on such things as the appearance and care of a new baby—food, bath, play, baby's first teeth and the like. It is unfortunate that the illustrator has apparently never seen a small baby. The newborn child looks at least two or three months old and is very obviously focusing its attention on some object. It is true that an older baby is more attractive, but since the purpose of this book is informational, the pictures might well have been less pretty and more accurate. The book could be read aloud to young children and could be read by the child himself in second or third grade. It will have its use in preparing an older brother or sister to make the adjustment to the new baby and to be ready to share in the welcome to it. Grades 2-3.

J. G. S.

Chennault of the Flying Tigers. By Sam Mims, with illustrations by Edward Shenton. Macrae-Smith, \$2.00.

In his childhood in Louisiana, Chennault early identified himself with courageous men in his own and his state's history. Although he dreamed of going to West Point, he was forced, because of lack of funds, to go into school-teaching. Then followed marriage, further study, and finally athletic directorship of the Louisville, Kentucky, Y.M.C.A., which position he held until the outbreak of World War I. Chennault was disappointed because he did not see action in war, and he stayed in the Air Service of the Regular Army, where he directed and instructed and after sixteen years achieved the rank of Major. During this time, he wrote a book called, *The Role of Defensive Pursuit*, in which he advocated greater use of the airplane in combat action. So new was his approach that, like Billy Mitchell, he was called a visionary and a radical, and drew down upon his head the scorn and contempt of his superior officers.

At the outbreak of the Japanese invasion of China, his friend Williamson persuaded Chiang-Kai-shek to place himself, Chennault, and Hansell in charge of the Chinese Air Corps. The last half of the book is devoted to the thrilling story of the Flying Tigers in China as told by the letters, diaries, and reports of these intrepid young men under the leadership of Chennault. The book is fascinating reading, especially the latter half, and will unquestionably be popular with boys in the upper grades and in high school.

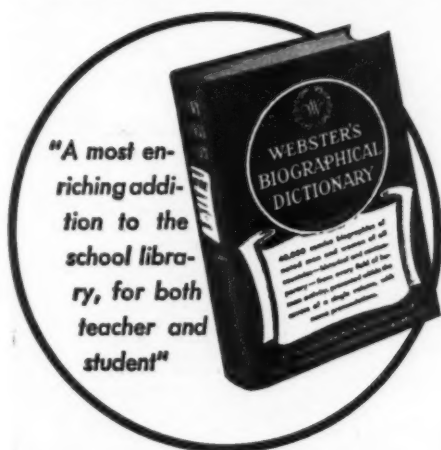
P. D.

Sammi's Army. By Howard Cook. Illustrated by the author. Doubleday, \$2.00.

In picture book style with simple sentences to complete pictures of great beauty, Sammi frolics with his animal pets on the ranch, only to find that an army of nine strange, bad soldiers, have landed on the beach. But Sammi's animal army prove too much for even these wicked men, and the book ends on their surrender to Sammi's army.

B. G. S.

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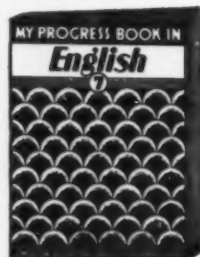
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